

The ROMANCE
OF CHRISTIAN
EXPERIENCE

SAMUEL JUDSON PORTER



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**The Romance of Christian
Experience**

The Romance of Christian Experience

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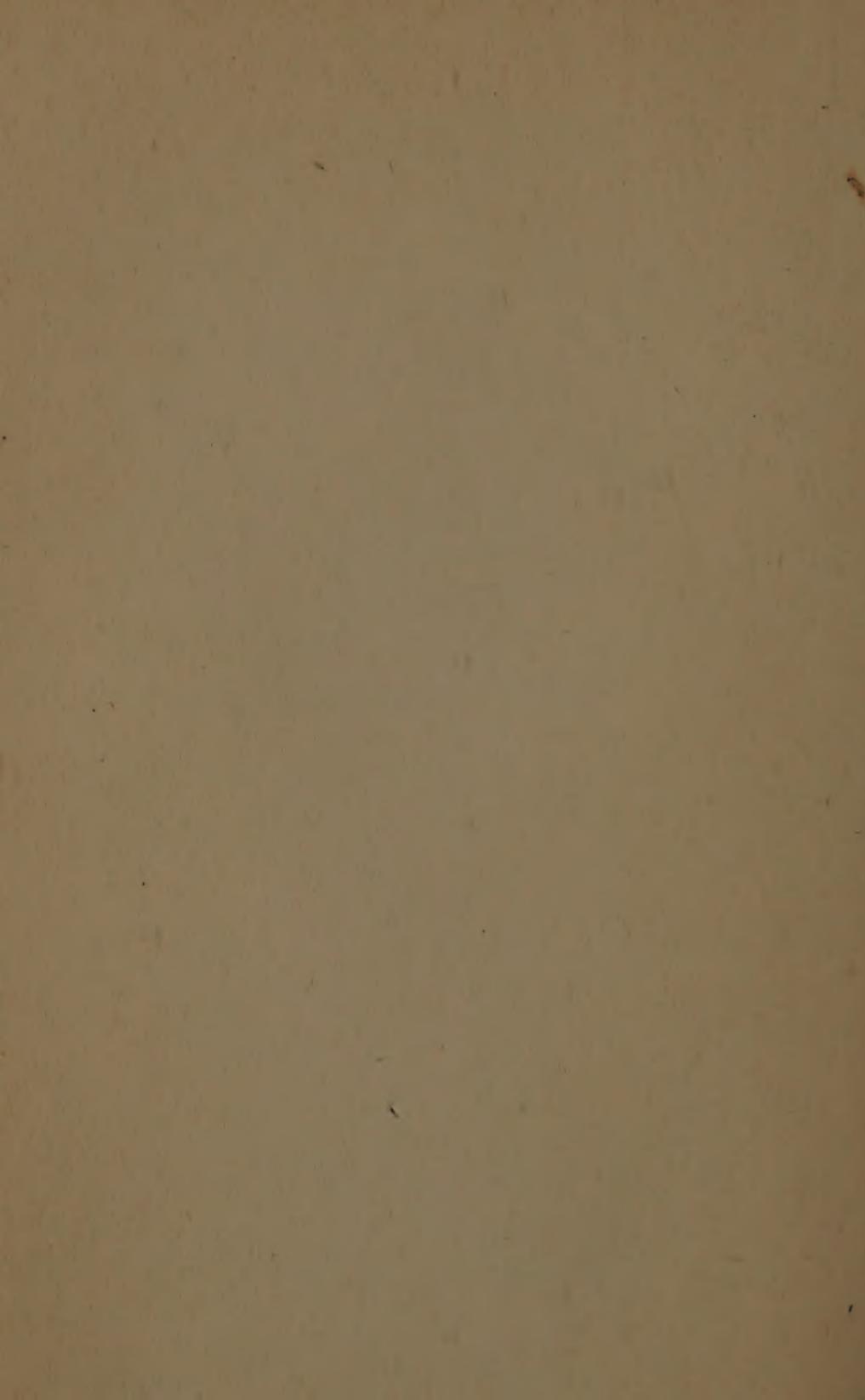
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New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

*This book
is dedicated to the
MOTHERS
of our
American Soldiers*



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I LOVE EXCELLING

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

"Love never faileth, but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

—1 CORINTHIANS 13.

IN this thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians the excellence of Christian love is set forth in terms so chaste, charming and forceful as to awaken wonder at the refined precision and exquisite beauty of human language. Through every sentence are traceable the marks of its divine

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authorship. In sweetness it exceeds the fragrance of flowers: in clearness it surpasses the dewdrop; in brilliance it outshines the sunbeam; while its strength is like the strength of the granite-girdled hills. If the chapter be likened to a beautiful eastward-facing window in the temple of truth, its triple parts are the three panels through whose multi-colored panes the soft light streams in radiant exhibition of the elements of love. In verses one, two and three the Primacy of Love is revealed; in verses four, five, six and seven the Properties of Love are catalogued; the other six verses display Love in its Permanency.

THE PRIMACY OF LOVE

In comparison with seven of the best thought of things that imagination can grasp the preëminent place is awarded to love. As satellites move around their planet, reflecting its light and obeying its attraction, so about love revolve these seven noble endowments: eloquence, prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, faith, benevolence, martyrdom. The number is seven—the sacred number, all-inclusive and complete.

Eloquence. First the comparison is drawn between love and eloquence. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.” The saying is true that “speech is one of our grand distinctions from the brute.” Its harmonious development has marked the progress of

mankind. With great satisfaction the historian records that one of the ancient tyrants could speak in the twenty-two dialects of the tribes over which he ruled. Of the many attainments which entitled a certain great Englishman to fame, not the least was his broad acquaintance with language. On a tour through the Continent it was related of him that in Greece he delivered an address in the Greek language, in Rome he spoke to an audience of Italians in their own musical tongue, in Germany he spoke German, while in Paris he made a speech in French. In genuine eloquence man reaches the limit of his highest powers over his fellows. "He is an orator that makes me think as he thinks, and feel as he feels." But great as is the power of eloquence it loses its deepest significance if it be not the expression of love. Though one speak with the eloquence of all the mighty orators, who have stirred the deepest emotions and swept their audiences into action, but fails to season his speech with love, his eloquence will be faulty and as void of worthful meaning as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Though one should speak with the angels face to face, and with seraphic voice sway the heavenly host with rhythmic periods unknown to mortal tongues, yet, despite this matchless power, one would be as nothing apart from a heart full of love. But this reference to oratory serves only as a stepping-stone to a thought which rises higher still.

Prophecy. "And though I have the gift of

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prophecy." Prophecy is the power of expounding the word and will of God. The prophet was first called a seer, that is, one who sees. Later he was called a prophet—one who says, a sayer. He sees the things of God and then says because he has seen them. He must have vision and voice, the one clarified, the other attuned; but this can be done only through love, since the man who speaks without it is but making useless noise. If to the gifted orator be granted the mental grasp and spiritual insight such as empowered the mighty prophets of old, endowing him with the tearful pathos of Jeremiah, the burning speech of Isaiah, the rapt vision of Ezekiel and the fervent courage of the later prophets, and then if there come upon him an additional enduement like that symbolized by the tongues of flame which rested on the heads of the apostles at Pentecost, so that with keen vision he be able to discover and interpret the thoughts of God to the minds of men, swaying them at will as the fields of ripe grain bend before the autumn winds, such a man, whatever he may appear to accomplish, if he be lacking in love, must at last be numbered among those who will say, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" only to receive the answer, "I never knew you!"

Wisdom. The comparison moves farther and farther into the deep things of life. "Though I understand all mysteries and have not love, I am nothing." While the word mystery refers to the

hidden things of doctrine, it may also include the hidden things of life, since doctrine is potent only as it bears on life; but in both doctrine and life there are many things deeply wrapped in mystery. There is mystery around us, within us, beyond us, on the earth, under the earth, and in the sky. There is mystery in the sparrow's song and in the ocean's roar. There is mystery in life and in death; in the babe's first smile and in the last sad sigh of the dying. It checks communion with the flowers at our feet, and with the stars that shine above. What if we could understand all mysteries? What if we could explore in detail the distant stars, bring to light the secret things of life and death and illumine the sombre problems that impall so many suffering souls! But what would it avail? Why frighten the wounded dove from her hiding-place under the dark pine-boughs if the rankling arrow must remain in her bleeding breast? Let mystery still veil the agony and the grief until relief can be brought by the hand of love. To love is greater than to understand mysteries, and we can love in spite of mystery.

Knowledge. Though I understand all truths revealed and known, though I repeat from memory every verse of Scripture, though I be conversant with the whole range of Christian doctrine and the vast accumulation of vexing theological problems, but do not know that love "which passeth knowledge," I am accounted nothing—a cipher standing alone, meaningless and valueless. The intellect of

the philosopher and the inspiration of the seer move but haltingly until vitalized and guided by love.

“For love is substance, truth the form ;
Truth without love were less than naught.”

Faith. “And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” Here is an echo of that wonderful declaration, “If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and it shall be done.” What greater gift could one possess than this intense, wonder-working faith, before which all obstacles must vanish away ? To catch the grandeur of this comparison it is only necessary to let imagination have its way for a moment. Think of a faith which merely says, “Be removed,” and at once the Rocky Mountains are uprooted and transported to the middle of the Pacific, while the Appalachians are transferred to the Atlantic, the Alps into the Mediterranean Sea, and the Himalayas into the depths of the Indian Ocean. To possess such power of faith is to vie with omnipotence. But even such a faith is dead without love. Faith without love is nothing.

“The childlike faith that asks not sight,
Waits not for wonder or for sign,
Believes because it loves, aright,
Shall see things greater, things divine.”

Benevolence. "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." It is a very easy thing to dole out alms to a beggar. Sometimes it is even despicable. It is often easier to give money than to give love; but though one possess millions of wealth and should give it all in building hospitals, asylums, orphanages, and other places of refuge, so that all the poor and suffering of earth should be relieved by the bounty, still the giver would be profited nothing unless the gifts be the outflow and measure of love.

Martyrdom. "And though I give my body to be burned, and have not love,"—though I should suffer the indescribable cruelties heaped upon the victims of the persecutions under Nero, who, being first covered with pitch, were burned alive on crosses in the imperial gardens; or though I should be tortured with all the horrors inflicted by the Spanish Inquisition, still it would profit me nothing if my heart were devoid of love.

The suppositions introduced in this comparison embrace the chief forms of religious activity. They who show themselves conspicuous in these various respects, but are empty of love, are as sound signifying nothing, they are nothing, they gain nothing. In this comparison the position of preëminence is joyfully yielded to love. Encircled within this royal group of seven it stands the unrivalled queen, imparting life, luster and vigor with equal generosity to all.

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THE PROPERTIES OF LOVE

In the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh verses love is analyzed. And this is done negatively and positively. By elimination we are helped in understanding the nature of love by having pointed out seven things which it does not possess ; and then in clearer light are celebrated the seven positive elements which combine in love.

Love's Opponents

The negatives of love may be named as follows : envy, arrogance, rudeness, avarice, anger, suspicion, connivance at evil.

Envy. Envy differs widely from jealousy in holding nothing in common with love, while jealousy is often love's strong ally. Envy seeks that which belongs to another, and to which it has no just right or claim. Jealousy resents intrusion upon that which is its own. Envy is always bad. Jealousy is not always bad, but sometimes justifiable. Envy strives to pull down those who outstrip it in the race. The definition that "envy is the grudging sense of relative inferiority" agrees with the saying that "a man who hath no virtue in himself ever envieth the virtue of another."

" Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach."

In the family circle love excludes faultfinding and petulance ; in the race of life it enters into healthy competition with others, but is cheerful

and cordial; in religious work it drives out that evil spirit of selfishness which would build itself up at the expense of another.

Arrogance. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." As love does not begrudge the gifts of others, so it is not eager to show off its own. It is not inflated with self-conceit; it is no boaster, no booster of its own moral wares. Love is not swaggerish, noisy, opinionated. It is not a braggart, nor the hero of its own stories. It does not seek admiration and applause. It is not fond of display nor does it partake of the spirit suggested by the pompous gait of the strutting peacock. From such bad taste and moral indecency love is clear.

Rudeness. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." Love is not boorish nor discourteous. It does not seek to act the clown—the opposite of genuine politeness. It bears no resemblance to the proverbial "pig in the flower garden," or "donkey in the parlor." It balances a man by bringing him into correct relations with his fellows and impelling him to act with consideration for their rights, imparting a delicacy of feeling and a refinement in conduct beyond the ordinary rules of politeness. It has been well said that "a beautiful form is better than a beautiful face, and a beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form; it gives a higher pleasure than statues or pictures—it is the finest of the fine arts."

Avarice. "Seeketh not her own." Love does not look out for self first of all, struggling for its

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share and more. Love gives no place to avarice which of all the vices is most apt to taint and corrupt the heart. Love does not seek "the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues" nor the end seats at church and in street cars. It does not drive hard bargains, but seeks to give rather than to receive. It puts away those sins which grow out of selfishness, such as dishonesty, sensuality and ambition. It is not always on the watch for its own rights, demanding the rewards, the precedence or the applause that may be due. It is not intent on its own advantage at all hazards. It does not exact its "pounds of flesh" regardless of consequences.

Anger. "Is not easily provoked." Love is not vitriolic, querulous, touchy. It is not like the porcupine, sullen and spiny. It is not crabbed. What a word is that, and how expressive! It is not clear whether it comes from "crab," which means a crusty, long-clawed, ill-tempered little sea-monster that runs sidewise and backwards, or from "crab," a small sour apple. At any rate it has an ugly meaning. It must be the etymological child of both words, and so, partaking of the nature of both parents, it means sour and snappish. But whatever its meaning, it does not describe love, for love is not crabbed, is not easily exasperated. It is not inflamed with resentment at every little slight, intentional or undesigned, nor does it make a mental note and lay up in its memory every real or imaginary wrong.

Suspicion. "Thinketh no evil," literally, to reckon, compute, count over, charge against. Love does not go about with a note-book and pencil in hand looking for faults and evil motives in others. "Faults are thick where love is thin." Love puts the best construction on the acts of others, makes every possible allowance for the defects which it discovers and does not indulge in grudge-bearing. It keeps saying :

" Think gently of the erring one !
And let us not forget,
However darkly stained by sin,
He is our brother yet."

Connivance at evil. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity." To rejoice in iniquity, when seen in others, is evidence of the very deepest debasement. It is not glad when others sin. It finds no pleasure in reporting the faults and weaknesses of others. It does not tattle. It abhors slander. It refuses to appear good by a depreciation of others. It will not exult over the ruins of a reputation, nor in discovering the sins, mistakes and hypocrisies of other men.

" The best things that the best believe
Are in her face so kindly writ,
The faithless, seeing her, conceive
Not only heaven, but hope of it."

Thus far only the negations of love have been indicated and branded to show that they do not belong to love. By this contrast the positive qual-

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ties will be made to appear in clearer relief. As the loveliest flowers often grow beneath the edge of the precipice, so a great literary triumph is here achieved by rescuing the sublime and beautiful out of the midst of the commonplace.

“ Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on
 all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass’d
 in music out of sight.”

In putting the above list of faults under the ban we but watch the smiting of the chord of self and under the infliction are made to feel the twinges of self-reproach. But in compensation we discover this same chord of self passing “in music out of sight” under the sevenfold stroke which is laid upon it; and, recalling the story of the sweet song sung by the dying swan, learn that love is the swan-song of dying selfishness.

Love’s Components

And now follows the positive description of love to which we may give attention as to a sweet seven-toned melody. Scan this list of love’s definite parts: long-suffering, kindness, joy in the truth, perseverance, loyalty, hopefulness, endurance; and as you are brought to judge of its true nature by examining its elements you will be impelled to the conclusion that

“ As every lovely hue is light,
 So every grace is love.”

Long-suffering. "Love suffereth long." This fine word, possibly more than any other, portrays the divine attitude toward disobedient, sinful men. Love never grows weary in well-doing, is not resentful, but waits patiently for its final vindication. Unlike the fiery flash of lightning, it shines on with the steady brilliance of a fixed star. The writer of this unexcelled panegyric exemplifies in his own life the long-suffering which he commemorates. Let him tell his own brief, heroic story: "In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Throughout this tragic experience he did not murmur nor complain, but lived up to the ideal which love set before him, declaring that it is love that constrains him.

Kindness. "And is kind." Long-suffering is a subjective quality; its correlative active grace is kindness. Our words "kind" and "kin" come from the same root, so that a kind person is one who acknowledges his "kinship" with others and acts upon it, confessing that he owes to them, as of

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one blood with himself, a debt of love, which he is ever seeking to repay. "Owe no man anything but to love one another." Once a little child, after gazing long upon the glories of a sunset scene, declared that he wished he were a painter so that he might help God paint the sky. The wish was a beautiful one, but impossible. God asks for no help in painting His clouds and sunsets, but He does invite us to help Him in putting touches of beauty into immortal lives by doing deeds of kindness.

"Let us be kind :
The way is long and lonely,
And human hearts are asking for this blessing
only —

That we be kind.

We cannot know the grief that men may borrow,
We cannot see the souls storm-swept by sorrow,
But love can shine upon the way to-day, to-
morrow,

Let us be kind.

"Let us be kind :
This is a wealth that has no measure,
This is of heaven and earth the highest treasure —

Let us be kind.

A tender word, a smile of love in meeting,
A song of hope and victory to those retreating,
A glimpse of God and brotherhood whose life is
fleeting —

Let us be kind."

Joy in the Truth. "Rejoiceth in the truth." Love seeks the truth because it cannot compromise

with falsehood. It will not brook the blandishments of superstition nor set store by the moldy relics of effete and false tradition. It rejoices to find the truth and is not afraid to make the search. It rejoices in accepting the truth after it has been found. It seeks to advance the truth by doing what is right. And when truth triumphs love is thrilled with a sympathetic delight.

“Do what is right,
Right things in great and small,
Then, though the sky should fall,
Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
You shall have light.”

Perseverance. “Beareth all things.” The metaphor is taken from a ship breasting the waves and bravely pushing on through the sea. Instead of being overcome, it overcomes. Love is proof against reproaches and hardships, or intrusion on its rights. It breasts the waves and finally arrives.

“Assailed by slander and the tongue of strife
Its only answer is a blameless life.”

Loyalty. “Believeth all things.” This does not mean that in order to prove our love we must believe every man’s creed, and be driven about by every wind of doctrine—that would be blind credulity; but the meaning is that we shall believe all that, with good conscience, can be believed to the credit of another. Such a quality may be easily imposed upon but it will never deceive nor betray. Love is not suspicious, but has a trustful disposition,

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expects well of others, believes there is good in them, even more than may appear, and seeks to discover and draw out that good. Her motto is:

“Believe not each accusing tongue,
As most weak persons do,
But still believe that story wrong,
Which ought not to be true.”

Hopefulness. “Hopeth all things.”

“And yet I well foresaw that love
Might hope where reason must despair.”

Love goes on working for men in the hope that they may be reclaimed. It finds its perfect expression in the mother who keeps praying for her wayward son, and will not give him up. Love sees the bow across the storm cloud and looks for the better time to come. Love hopeth all things.

“She sees the best that glimmers through the worst,
She feels the sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer through the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed,
‘Mirage.’”

Endurance. “Endureth all things.” Love continues bearing, believing, and hoping to the end. She will not retrace nor retreat. No obstacles are great enough to stop her work, no burdens too heavy to make her fall into despair. This word “endureth” is found in Hebrews 12:2, where ref-

erence is made to "enduring the cross." The verb is in the imperfect tense and is permissibly rendered "kept on staying under." Here is love's final test. It keeps on staying under. If "it gets from under," it was not love to begin with. I have seen a picture of a dim, vanishing cross above which appears a bright crown of gold. Underneath are the lines:

"Bidding my heart look up, not down,
While the cross fades before the crown."

THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE

"Love never faileth." The love that bears all things is the love that outwears all things. It is imperishable. There can never come a time when it will give way to some higher quality, or when it will cease to be the criterion of the whole moral state. In the last six verses of the chapter the permanence of love is emphasized in a threefold way: first, by a series of comparisons; second, by a beautiful illustration; and third, by an appeal to experience.

The Power of Love to Last is Shown in a Three-fold Comparison. Three things thought to be fixed and durable are shown to be passing away while love remains. These three great gifts to the early Church were only temporary benefits to be removed, as the scaffolding when the building approaches completion or the props which the nurseryman takes away when the sapling has grown into a tree.

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Failing Prophecies. “Whether there be prophecies they shall fail.” They fail, not in the sense that they come short of fulfillment, for heaven and earth would sooner pass away, but they are said to fail because having been fulfilled they become inactive. Their purpose being served they have no further mission than to confirm our faith, standing like sign-boards on the way over which God has led His people into fuller light and clearer knowledge. Their work finished, they are inoperative like seed capsules from which the plants have sprung. Prophecy is but an incident in the scheme of revealed redemption, while love is its constant motive and unchanging inspiration.

Silent Tongues. “Whether there be tongues they shall cease.” The special gift of tongues bestowed upon the first disciples ceased long ago, because no longer needed when the ordinary preaching of the Gospel and the compiled writings of the New Testament had become established institutions. Interpret the words in any sense you choose—even going beyond the specific meaning which applies them to the coveted “gifts of tongues,” still the truth remains the same, that, when tongues “stop,” love leads on into the “more excellent way.” Make the application to language, taking for example the Greek language in which this chapter was written. It has suffered changes so marked that it may almost be called a dead language when compared with modern Greek. It has ceased as have the other languages of that day. Following

the inevitable law of language they have given way to modern dialects just as Anglo-Saxon, the tongue of our ancestors, has been so far superseded by modern English as to be wholly unintelligible to English readers of the present time. Or, again, if we think of the tongues whose gentle speech has stirred and cheered our hearts, the words yet remain true that, "whether there be tongues they shall cease." There is scarcely one among us who has not at some time or other in the depth of solitude sighed

"for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still,"

but love, the inspiring motive of those now hushed voices, lives on unceasing and unenfeeble.

Vanishing Knowledge. "Whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." As the stars are dim before the light of the sun, so the knowledge of the ancients gives place before the larger knowledge of modern times. Most of the school books in use twenty years ago are now useless. A new encyclopedia gets out of date in ten years, and scientific books become worthless except as history in from ten to twenty-five years. The long rows of shelf-worn books in the second-hand bookstores bear testimony that "whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." The growth of knowledge has kept pace with the increase in facilities for its communication. Along the southern coast of Spain are still to be seen the ruins of a long line of towers which served long ago as stations for signalling

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messages across the country. With this primitive method compare the present wireless telegraphy. Compare the "posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries" bearing letters from King Ahasuerus for the Jews' redemption with the wireless telegraphy which carries the human voice across the continent with the swiftness of the swiftest lightning: And the time will come when our present knowledge of God and divine things will be so fragmentary and incomplete that it will have to give place to that fuller knowledge which "grows from more to more."

"The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His Word."

"Fail," "cease," "vanish away,"—such are the words which describe the fleeting nature of those things which seem most permanent. But love remains the same. We know in part, and we prophesy in part, "but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." As all the parts are absorbed in the whole so all other graces and attainments are perfected and united in love.

"They sin who tell us love can die,
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
But love is indestructible.
Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth,
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of love is there."

2) *In the Next Place the Lasting Qualities of Love Are Pictured in a Carefully Conceived Illustration.* "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Hardly could another figure be used that would appeal more keenly to a genuine appreciation of love than this reference to the expanding powers of growing childhood. Many of the attainments recounted in this chapter are but the external expressions of love. They are love's incidentals, as the varying shapes and styles of dress are but gradations in the life of the growing child. Love itself is the unchanging fact, these accessories but mark the stages in its unfolding—lower leaves on the stalk which bears the perfect flower. Though sublimely important in their relations, still they are transitory, while love is eternal. Here our illustration may be illustrated: The home and scenes of my childhood had greatly changed and grown strangely unfamiliar to me. For many years my father had been dead, his body resting beneath the moaning pines. The comrades of my youth—many of them had moved to other parts, many of them were dead. My home had been made in a distant city, and I was enjoying the luxury of a visit from my aged mother. One evening as she and I sat alone in the library talking of those

"Whom we had loved long since, and lost awhile,"

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she arose, came over and sat down near me. Taking my hand in hers, she said gently, "Yes, there have been many changes. You have changed some, but you are still a boy to me—still my boy." Then I discovered a new and true meaning of this verse. For me there had been many changes. In fact, change had marked almost everything which I knew as a child ; but here was one thing which had not suffered change. Through the transient years the mother-love had remained constant, with the child-heart answering its call.

"This love in early infancy began
And rose as childhood ripened into man."

Let this relation be expanded and transfigured into the realm of the heavenly, and it will not be hard to understand something of the unchanging beauty and power of the love which this unparalleled chapter panegyrizes, for

"What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things thereon
Each to the other like?"

The Appeal to Experience. Reaching the climax of testimony to the permanence of love, appeal is made to the knowledge acquired by actual experience. "And you cannot go back of personal experience," is the recent declaration of a famous psychologist. Though this knowledge is incomplete it serves its purpose as basis for knowing

things yet to be experienced, just as, with only a segment given, the full area of a circle may be determined. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." The common mirror or glass of antiquity was a thin disk of bronze, highly polished, though necessarily imperfect; glass mirrors with perfect curves and surfaces being the finest result of the most perfect machinery of our day. Those ancient mirrors, the best of which were made at Corinth, were so small that only part of a large object could be seen in them, and so dim in comparison with our glass mirrors that what was seen in them was seen as in an enigma, as the word for "darkly" means. There must be of necessity much guessing and uncertainty at the things seen in such mirrors, but they served their purpose, for the reflections which they gave, though dim, were clear enough to form a basis of an adequate knowledge of the objects beheld. So our present knowledge of things divine may be imperfect, but it will continue to increase until we shall know even as we are known.

What we know we know. Our knowledge may not be perfect, but what there is of it is real. What is truly known becomes a part of the one knowing it. Consciousness is experience. Is it too much to say that the Christian consciousness may be so far in contact with the ultimate realities of the universe as to know some things unknowable through any external medium? How otherwise

are we able to say with Paul, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose," and "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens;" or with John, "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." In the same way, speaking out of our inner consciousness of love we may say, "Now I know." This consciousness grasps love's future, assuring us of its eternal permanence. Being a matter of consciousness love is also a fact of experience, so that what Paul describes objectively, he certifies subjectively. That love which has stood before him like a crown whose gems he enumerates and admires becomes a thing of life within him. While he gazes upon the crown its royal Possessor takes the throne of his heart. The external becomes the internal; the impersonal becomes the personal, until what he knows, in turn knows him—"I know even as also I am known."

As the field of experience has been entered may we not go a little farther—far enough to say that Paul loves what he described as love, and that he feels that the Object of his love is loving him? At any rate the question comes up, What is the love which has been described impersonally? Are we to stop at thinking of it as a quality, an emanation, an influence? It is all of these, and yet in saying this we feel that all has not been said. We have

witnessed its primacy, analyzed its properties, and believe in its permanence, but wonder if that is all. Reading still more closely we feel that there is objectified here what Paul felt within himself but which every Christian knows subsists in perfection in Christ. With this in mind we easily sense the character of Christ impictured in this happy outline, which stands in the middle of the epistles like a master-painting in the central aisle of a great cathedral. Notice that the name of Deity is not mentioned, that the name of Christ does not once appear—the only chapter in all his writings of which this is true. Think of it. How could Paul write one chapter, and that chapter a description of love, without mentioning the name of his Lord ? Let us see. Whose portrait is that which hangs in the central place in your home, before which you stop again and again, and upon which you gaze with tenderness, while fond recollections rush through your soul and emotions are deeply stirred ? Whose picture is that ? Your mother's ? But does it bear her name ? Scarcely so. There is no need to write mother's name upon mother's picture. Is there not a hint here for us ? Has not Paul given in this masterpiece a picture of " the face of Jesus Christ " ? Have you not already detected the lineaments of His countenance in those verses which give us the properties of love ? Who but Him fills this inspired measure ? He it is who " suffereth long and is kind," who " beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all

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things." Is not this the picture of the face of Him whose name is Love ?

" Such was the portrait an apostle drew,
The bright Original was one he knew ;
Heaven held his hand, the likeness must be
true."

If, as Michael Angelo says, "Fine painting is only an image of God's perfection ; a shadow of the pencil with which He paints ; a melody, a striving after harmony," do not we discover in this inspired pen-picture of Him, who is the Image of God, not only the divine Perfection, but the eternal Melody as well, and the great unbroken Harmony ?

Contemplating the picture contained in this chapter, do we not find ourselves falling in love anew with the divine Original ? Looking upon the picture of the departed mother have we not often lived over again the sweet days of childhood under the glory and charm of her presence ? Likewise the simple reading of this chapter ought to be for us a holy moment of gazing upon the face of the Redeemer ; and though we see Him only as in a picture, though we look upon Him in this poem chapter as through a glass darkly, yet that sight of Him assures and reassures us, and we triumph in the exultant thought that while we now know only in part, we shall at last know Him in full.

Under this appeal to the testimony of experience, and as dimly illustrating it, I mention, with some reluctance, a dream which came to me under

circumstances that need not here be described. Under such intense emotion as I never knew at any other time, I dreamed that I saw the Redeemer on the cross. As I gazed upon Him in wonderment, He said, repeating the words again so that I understood them, "Did you ever know before how much I loved you?" Never did a look search my soul so deeply as that which I met in His face, and never have words pierced so far into my heart as those which I heard in that dream. I was awed, burdened, transfixed, then experienced such a sense of uplift and liberation as I had never imagined a mortal man could know. In addition to this I became so conscious of His love that I was overwhelmingly oppressed by it, as one plunged into the depths of a boundless sea. At the same time there came upon me such a flood of ineffable joy and gladness mingled with gratitude that, by combining all possible rich colors and beautiful objects with all the glories of all the mornings I have ever seen or dreamed of, I can find nothing worthy to be compared to it in wealth of delight and splendor. I awoke, but the dream remained with me, an epoch in my life, a fixed fact from which I shall never get away. But this with every like experience can be only a beginning. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." What joy, what incomparable rapture will be ours, when entering into His immediate presence we shall see Him face to face! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed

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upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

" Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing ;
But O the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King !
And I shall see Him face to face
And tell the story—Saved by grace."

Until that day the supreme business of life is to make these ideals of love real in conduct and character. The thought of the primacy of love should impel us to give it the prime place in our lives; and we can never task ourselves more nobly than in striving to make the properties of love our own, wearing them like a chaplet, or, better still, growing them in our hearts like flowers. Let them grow. The odors will be our reward, nor will our neighbor's enjoyment of them impoverish us at all —only we must root up love's opponents so that the positive graces may thrive. Contemplate the permanence of love until it shines like a fixed star, by which to steer the soul's homeward course.

" Let love be so,
Unlimited in its self-sacrifice,
Then is the tale true and God shows complete."

II

CHRIST AND PERSONALITY

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out ; and finding him, he said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God ? He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him ? Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."—JOHN 9 :35-38.

IN that remarkable book, "The Romance of Sandro Botticelli," in which is told the story of the development of the artist Botticelli, it is pointed out that the painter's success came through his endeavor to portray the soul, and we are told that it was a good woman, the wife of his teacher, who showed the boy painter that the soul is not merely "a little something in the breast that will go to heaven if one is good," but the "ego" which came into existence when God created the soul and united it with the body. This discovery became the starting point in the unfolding of the artist's genius ; and this discovery of the soul is probably the greatest epoch in the development of any personality, particularly if it is discovered that the soul is not something apart from the personality, but the personality itself.

Jesus is the great man-finder. He found Philip and said unto him, "Follow me." He found the

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man whom He had cured of blindness when others had cast him out. He found him and through a personal contact drew from him a noble confession and devout worship. Another blind man He took by the hand, led him out of the town, put his hands upon him, drew him out with questions, and healed him. In the great tripartite parable, the shepherd "finds" the sheep, the woman "finds" the coin, and the lost son is "found" and restored to his father's house. Under the title of "Christ and Personality" these three subjects are worthy of thought: Christ, the Discoverer of Personality; Christ, the Developer of Personality; Christ, the Determiner of Personal Character.

I. CHRIST'S GLORY APPEARS IN HIS ADAPTABILITY IN DISCOVERING PERSONALITY.

The Gospel is not a rigid form into which all life is to be moulded and fixed into a stiff regularity, but a regenerative force pouring into the life, redeeming and glorifying it but not robbing it of its individuality. In the New Testament we have the Gospel according to Matthew, the Gospel according to Mark, the Gospel according to Luke, and the Gospel according to John, which, in a general way, may be considered as interpretations of the fact of Christ as this fact was experienced by the individuals whose names the gospel stories bear. Following these comes Paul's interpretation, in which he speaks of "My Gospel," so that we have in his thirteen epistles the Gospel according to Paul, that

is, Paul's picture of Jesus, and this is stamped everywhere with the character of Paul's own personality. In one place he embraces his converts within the circle of his own experiences and says, "Our Gospel." The Gospel is newly interpreted every time it wins a new convert. And the Gospels are not four in number, nor five, but ten thousand times ten thousand, and the last word of every one of them is, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

In the Uffizi Gallery in Florence as one passes from the vast salas where are displayed the famous works of classic art, such as "The Birth of Venus," with its pale pink roses blown across the blue-gray sea, and enters into the Flemish room, one steps into a totally different environment. The center of attraction in this room of masterpieces is the enormous "Nativity" by Hugo Van Der Goes, which takes up all of one wall. In the center of this immense canvas, apart from all the other figures, is the new-born Babe, "a ray of purity" on the stable floor. Among the other worshippers, but a little apart from them, Mary is seen, also the shepherds who have left their flocks survey the babe with a simple love and delight. There is no parade of costly gifts—two vases of flowers are the only offerings. The remarkable thing about this painting is that from the face of the Child emanates a marvellous light which adds beauty to the face of the virgin mother, glorifies with a heavenly splendor the rugged faces of the peasant shepherds, and illu-

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minates even the posts and rafters as well as the faces of the angels that hover in the background. The spiritual insight of the artist appears in his depiction of the light that shines from the holy face upon all alike, emphasizing and glorifying every feature upon which it falls. So is the glorious power of Christ revealed in the characters and lives of those whom it enters. Christ is perpetually revealed through the medium of those who behold Him and respond to Him. Every new soul that trusts and receives Him becomes a fresh revelation of His grace. So is He dependent on us for His continuous self-revelation. "If my right hand slacked," said Antonio Stradivari, "I should rob God, for while God is fullest good, He cannot make the violins of Antonio Stradivari without Antonio."

It is interesting to note in the New Testament the noble declarations of personality which are made in the strength of what the Gospel offers and achieves. From the many which might be cited, only seven are chosen as sufficient to establish the claim that the Gospel makes possible a declaration of personality which has never been made elsewhere.

"I will arise and go to my father . . . and he arose and came to his father" (Luke 15:18, 20). This derelict of humanity, commonly called the prodigal son, having lost well-nigh everything, so far climbed out of the débris of his ruined life as to assert his will, saying, "I will arise," and to carry out his resolution; and this he does as he

thinks of his sin, his father and heaven, and what the future has in store for him.

1 Corinthians 15:10 contains what is probably the noblest assertion of personality ever made by a human being when Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It is through grace that he comes to this self-realization.

This self-consciousness, through grace, supplies the basis of a knowledge which cannot be acquired in the ordinary way, and which amounts to conscious contact with the ultimate realities of the universe, as when in 2 Timothy 1:12, it is declared : "I know him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day;" or in Romans 8:28, where it is stated, "We know that to them that love God, all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose."

And this knowledge of grace supplies the individual with conscious strength to make another marvellous assertion : "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Where there is strength, there must be obligation, and so in Romans 15:1 occurs this pronouncement: "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

Has there ever been a finer declaration of personality than this? But such heights of personality are attained only through the inspiration of

love such as Peter avowed to Jesus by the sea-side in the early morning light when he declared: "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

Mounting on this ascending scale in personality, with all self-will subdued, we may each stand on our Calvary and say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2: 20). Notice that he says that he has been crucified with Christ before he says, "I now live in the faith of the Son of God." Here then, we have what may be called the Gospel's sevenfold declaration of personality: *I will, I am, I know, I can, I ought, I love, I live.* And all this is done in the strength of Christ, who discovers and singles out personality and urges it on to these sublime and disciplined expressions of freedom and life.

II. CHRIST'S GRACE IS DISPLAYED THROUGH HIS ABILITY IN DEVELOPING THE POWERS OF PERSONALITY.

The late Professor Tyndall reports a curious experience through which he once passed while delivering a lecture. Inadvertently touching a battery of Leyden jars charged with electricity, he received a shock which for the moment destroyed all consciousness. After a few seconds he remembered that he was standing before an audience in the act

of lecturing. What he calls optical consciousness was much longer in returning than the mental consciousness of his own personality. He seemed to see bits of himself hanging mysteriously in the air. The limbs were apparently separated from the body, and it was only after an appreciable interval that he was able to realize his own bodily form in the complete unity of its parts.

Sometimes we find a similar condition of things in the religious life and experience. We seem to be broken into little bits and are unable to articulate our *disjecta membra* into anything like a unity. Here Christ comes in to unify, develop and direct.

A famous and beloved university professor, who died not long ago, in referring to an experiment in electro-magnetism which he was accustomed to perform every year in his classroom work, said that he never repeated this experiment without the increasing sense of awe at the mysterious powers about him and above him. The experiment was this: On an oak table was placed a pile of horseshoe nails. In one corner of the same room was a powerful dynamo. When the electric current was turned on and the poles of the battery were brought up under the table, although they did not touch the nails themselves, immediately there was constituted about the table a field of magnetic force. So long as this field of force was maintained the loose horseshoe nails could be built up into various forms, such as a cube, a sphere, or an arch. So long as the current was on, the nails would stay in exactly

the form placed, as if they had been soldered together, but the moment the current was cut off the nails would fall into a shapeless mass. What the field of magnetic force was to the nails, we may conceive Christ's unifying, directing power to be to those who come under its influence. And this is the power of life, of endless, divine life.

“ ‘Tis life whereof our nerves are scant ;
Oh ! life, not death, for which we pant ;
More life and fuller that we want.”

Jesus says, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” “More abundantly.” In the Greek it is one word, and means a surplus, more than sufficient, more than can be used. It is the same word rendered “enough and to spare” in the story of the Prodigal Son. This is the meaning of the life which Jesus came to give.

With intensive assiduity a young artist gave himself to the carving of an angel's statue. Desiring to know what the master thought of his work, he concealed himself as the master entered. Gazing upon the work of his pupil, the great one said : “It lacks only one thing, only one thing.” The young sculptor was so troubled at this criticism that he could scarcely eat or sleep. He made known his distress to a friend who undertook to find out what the master meant. Visiting him, he made mention of the piece of statuary which the young man was doing and asked what it lacked.

“Man,” replied Michael Angelo, “it lacks only life. If it had life it would be as perfect as God Himself could make it.” What was meant as praise for the apprentice carries a poignant suggestion for us. All our efforts at achievement, all our aspirations, all our life’s programs are imperfect even as they are lifeless, until Christ imparts the life, tone and direction.

“ What the hand is to the lute,
What the breath is to the flute,
What is fragrance to the smell,
What the spring is to the well,
What the flower is to the bee,
That is Jesus Christ to me.

“ What the mother to the child,
What the guide in pathless wild,
What is oil to troubled wave,
What is ransom to the slave,
What is water to the sea,
That is Jesus Christ to me.”

The very genius of the Gospel—and herein lies its glory, too—is the recognition it gives to personality. Christ takes men just as He finds them and brings them up into realization of their best selves. Herein the gospel method is not at variance with natural processes. No two roses are alike. Every pansy is a fresh study. And one star differeth from another star in glory. The triumph of arboriculture is not in transforming an oak into a palm, but in making the oak and the palm each to be the very best of its kind. In education this principle has

come to be a law. Educators now insist that individuality must be preserved. The child's nature is guided and obstructions are removed. True, indeed, it is that a man cannot be educated into being a Christian, but after the miracle of regeneration has been performed in his soul then he is given the principles of unfolding from within himself the spiritual life divinely implanted within him. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

Some one has said that Plato, Milton, Edwards, Napoleon, and John Howard possessed to a great degree the faculty of imagination; but this, united with other peculiar powers of each one's mind, made one a philosopher, another a poet, another a theologian, another a soldier, and another a philanthropist. So each individual responding to the spirit of Christ at last reaches a development distinctly his own because he finds in Christ that which meets his own specific needs. And this is true because Jesus is myriad-sided. In Him is found a center of relationship for all the mighty circle of humanity, Himself being the universal and archetypal man—the sum total of enfolded, fulfilled humanity. He fits into every life which unbars itself to Him. And just as the life-tide in the spring time rises from the earth, pushes its way up into every plant, urging it onward and outward to its own complete self-realization, so the Christ-life spreads its domin-

ion over and through all lives that will receive it, impelling them into filling up their complete boundaries.

III. CHRIST'S TRIUMPH IS ACHIEVED IN HIS PROGRAM FOR DETERMINING THE CHARACTER OF PERSONALITY.

"But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55). "Hereby know ye that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 John 4:13). Between these two scriptures are included vast areas of experience. They measure the growth of a noble soul, and tell the story of spiritual discipline, evolution and expansion. They both relate to John, whose character is one of the richest, most varied and most interesting of all those who come within the sphere of Jesus' personal influence.

Medieval art, particularly as it shows John in the company of Jesus, has always pictured him as a handsome youth, whose face was femininely sweet and whose bearing was a beautiful blending of modesty and grace. But the real John throughout all the earlier years of his life was a far different character. Three times before the crucifixion John is mentioned prominently and in each instance there are revealed in him elements of harshness, cruelty and selfishness, which are quite at variance with the gentle, lovely portraiture attributed to him by the Monastic painters. The

first instance in which his unloving character appears was when he requested that fire might be called down from the heavens upon the Samaritans who refused hospitality to his Master ; on another occasion he forbade an outsider who followed not with the apostolic company from casting out demons in Christ's name ; and on a third occasion with his mother and brother he made the request to have a situation of preëminence next to Christ in the establishment of His kingdom. On each of these occasions John was rebuked by his Master, not for his aggressiveness, but for the method of expression. His aggression was the growing bud which required careful training. His aggression must find happier expression. His manners and methods must be mended. He had not yet come to his best self. Christ censured him, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." He had the spirit. It was the spirit of his Master which would ultimately make him gentle and lovely, but as yet this spirit, so to speak, was in its incipiency. Like a tender plant it had been set in the soil of his nature, but more than once it had been well-nigh crushed by his rough, vehement passions. Christ rebuked him and instructed him. He was told that Christ's cup should be his cup, and Christ's baptism should be his baptism. Under the friendly chastening of the corrective years John grew sweeter. At last the spirit whose subtle power and sway he did not fully know at first became regnant in his life, so that he no longer

forbade men to use the name of Christ, nor would he call down fire to consume those who would not guess the worthy cause. Nor did he longer clamor for a high place in the kingdom. The spirit of his Lord wrought this glorious change. In consummating this transformation Christ worked from within John's life outward, so that John did not become the imitator of the external Christ, but the emulator of the internal Christ.

“ Our crosses are hewn from different trees,
But we must all have our Calvaries :
We may climb the height from a different
side,
But each go up to be crucified.
As we scale the steep, another may share
The dreadful load that our shoulders bear,
But the costliest sorrow is all our own —
For on the summit we bleed alone.”

They were looking at two statues. Said Fitzgerald, “ What is it in this statue of David which is so clearly lacking in Goethe's statue ? ” “ Divine intensity,” replied Tennyson ; and this is a tremendous difference. Divine intensity. It is the difference between the culture of the head and the eternal life of the heart. Polish, orderliness and uniformity are beautiful indeed as they have shone in Goethe and what he wrote, but they lack the divine intensity, the fire, the warmth, the glow. It is life—this divine intensity is divine life. I have heard the quaint and noble John Robertson tell a story of how in the long ago the fires went

out in all the homes of a Scottish village except in a certain cottage that clung to the mountainside whose hearth-fire, it was discovered, still brightly burned. Here gathered the Highlanders to kindle their peat, and guarding it carefully against the frisky winds, they carried it down and soon every hearth in the village glowed again with the accustomed fires. The hearths were there, the houses were there, the fuel was there, but there was no burning; for the fire they must climb and then bring it back again. On some heart altars the fires are but smoldering embers, needing to be stirred and fanned into a flame. "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee." In the very next verse we read that the gift of God is one of power and of love and of a sound mind. How greatly does this three-fold gift need stirring. Remember that "stir" in this connection means to blow upon, as to blow upon the coals. The life is there. Give it a chance to flame. The divine intensity, let it burn. Blow upon it and let it burn. Let it burn away the dross and débris and purify that which is precious and true. Let it burn, illuminating the heart within and the path without. Let it burn. Doing this, it will spread afar. Let it burn, and in its light you may interpret life and duty and God and the world.

The largest life is not attained by running away from difficulties. In Ibsen's drama, "A Doll's House," Nora, the girl wife and mother, wakes up to a realization that she has never understood life,

has never become a full rounded personality. "Our house," she says to her husband, "has been nothing but a play room. I have been your doll wife; the children in turn have been my dolls. Now all this is over and I must try to make myself a woman and seek the fulfillment of my own life." When the husband remonstrates: "Before all else, Nora, you are a wife and mother," she chokes off discussion by saying, "I no longer believe it. I believe that before all else I am a human being." And so cutting loose from every tie of wifehood and motherhood, she goes out into the world to fulfill her duties to herself. How often have we seen the tragic end of such a program. The fulfillment of life is not in selfishness. We best fulfill our duties to ourselves as we fulfill our duties to others. How otherwise can a wife and mother make herself a woman and find the fulfillment of her own life than by fulfilling her mission as wife and mother? As there is no detached greatness, so there can be no detached goodness. Human beings realize themselves as they live out their lives as human beings among other human beings. "For merit lives from man to man." Life must be lived where it is, not the victim of environment but finding in its environment the field for victory. Basil, a Greek father of the fourth century, thought that the only way to escape the world, the flesh and the devil, was to retire to a retreat. In a letter to a friend he said, however, "Although I have left behind me the

diversions of the city as a cause of innumerable evils, I have not been able to leave myself." He missed the way of victory. There is a better way and it is the true way. The Christian life is the Christ life. The goal for each believer is to be transformed into His image, to be like Him, to be a full-grown man in Christ Jesus. Christ was the perfect revelation of God in the only substance which is capable of representing the divine, that is, the human substance. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Human nature was capable of receiving Christ, and it was in human nature that Christ lived His life. What Christ did once He is repeating. Every triumphant Christian life means the reincarnation of the Christ spirit.

On one occasion the highly sensitive Jeremiah said, "Oh ! that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them ;" but when the king of Babylon loosed the chains from his hands, invited him to dine at the royal table, and go wheresoever it seemed convenient unto him to go, it is recorded that Jeremiah went unto Gedaliah to Mizpah and dwelt with him among the people that were in the land ; he would not run away from his tasks but stayed by those whom he could help. Thus he lived his best life and his character grew in grandeur and glory. It is not enough to live our lives, they must be lived to purpose.

"Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues."

God has a place for each one of us to fill but our niches were designed for our largest selves ; each has a life to live that can be lived by no other. Each personality ought to be a new revelation of the grace and glory of God. Since this is true, we hinder ourselves and thwart His program if we do not reverently respect our own individuality. Without being angular, let every one believe in his own angle and work upon the assumption that it is through his own unrepeated personality that God purposes His light to break with a new radiance upon the world.

“Are we not higher than the sod,
Are we not channels for our God
To work through—on this lower plane,
To live—that He may live again?
We all are sculptors—and alone ;
Each block of marble is our own ;
And we may fashion it so fair,
That earth and sky and sun and air
Shall think it is a prism true,
With God’s own glory shining through.”

III

CHRIST'S ANSWER TO THE QUEST FOR GOD¹

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"

—JOHN 14:8, 9.

AMONG the paintings on the walls of the Congressional Library in Washington is one called "Religion." The picture consists of two worshippers, a boy and girl, kneeling before a stone altar, from which ascends the smoke of their sacrifice. In the background appear huge jagged rocks, the forest trees form a leafy roof above the children, and clusters of white lilies grow around the stones of the altar. The whole conception seems accurate and constructive. The purity of the lilies, the burning sacrifice with its rising smoke, the stately rocks and lofty trees, united with the simple reverence of the rustic children, remind us of the transparent devotion and honest affection which must always be the marks of genuine religion.

¹ Preached to a large congregation of soldiers and civilians in Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Sunday evening, July 22, 1917.

The truly religious man must ever be striving for the qualities illustrated by the humility and trustfulness of childhood, the purity of the lilies, the upward growth of the trees, the solidity and durability of the rocks, while on the altar of his heart must be kept burning the unceasing fires, wherein are sacrificed to the service of God the best gifts of his life.

But these are only the marks of religion—the outward expressions of an inner experience. Religion itself consists in an actual experience with an actual personality. Communion with nature is not religion. Whispering breezes, shimmering waves, rustling leaves, floating clouds, sunset splendors, may stir the emotions deeply but the great needs of the soul are not met until they are met in God. Noah looked upon the rainbow, Moses stood by the burning bush in the wilderness, Elijah witnessed the storm and the fire and the earthquake, but these phenomena of nature had no message for the soul only as they prefaced the way for the still small voice of the living God. Neither does religion in its essence inhere in localities, ceremonies, rituals, customs, nor creeds, but in fellowship with the living, loving Father. To the woman at the well of whom He had requested water, Jesus said, "Believe me the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship

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him." Religion is the soul's answer to the Father in His search for worshippers.

Some one has said that man is incurably religious, that is to say, man does not enter into the highest realization of himself until he is truly religious. How then may we be religious? How may we enter into fellowship with God? How may we know the Father? How may we enjoy His presence and realize His love? These are questions of supreme importance to us all. Hear the words of Jesus: "I am the way, and the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Responding to this sweeping statement, Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Are we not tempted to adopt Philip as our spokesman? How remote we sometimes seem to be from the center of things, as we "stretch lame hands" to grope our way to light and life, beset by the disturbing influences and beclouded by doubts. "Show us the Father," we are tempted to say. Let us catch a glimpse of the eternal One who rules over all. Take us but once into the inner court of things and show us the Father in whom we live and it will satisfy us. The uncertainty and mystery of it all vexes, almost irritates us. We want things made plainer. For once we would be admitted behind the scenes to see the hand that governs all. We want to know all that we can know, whither we are going and what is to become of us when we are done with this present world. We crave assurance that behind all this

silent, immovable mask of outward things there is a living, loving God whom we can trust and who can take care of us unto everlasting life.

In the Rospiglioso Palace in Rome is the elegant fresco by Guido—"The Aurora." It covers a lofty ceiling in the spacious hall. Gazing at it from the pavement, the neck grows tired, the head becomes dizzy, while the figures appear indistinct. From weariness you soon lose interest and would turn away in disappointment were it not that the owner of the palace has caused to be placed near the floor a broad and clear mirror by which you may sit as at a large table and, at leisure, looking into its limpid surface, may see the gorgeous painting, which is now brought down within easy reach of your vision. There is no more weariness, no more dizziness, no more indistinctness. By means of the perfect mirror, "The Aurora" has been brought down to us. For all purposes of observation and study the reflection is the precise reproduction in every particular of the wonderful fresco. Like this mirror beneath "The Aurora," Christ in His flawless human nature images the invisible Father and brings down the divine nature, revealing it to our eyes. Instead of receiving an immediate answer to his prayer, Philip is instructed that his prayer has already been answered in the revealing life of his Master.

To Philip's request Jesus replies, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the

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Father?" Jesus reveals the Father and opens the way for us to come to Him. No further revelation is to be made, because no further revelation is needed or can be made. If we want to know who God is, we may find out by studying the life and works of Christ, for He reveals the Father in His fullness. Does God care for the world in which we live? Christ answers that question in His life of unselfish service to the world. Does God care for little children? This question is answered by Jesus taking little children up in His arms and blessing them. Does God care for the sick, and wounded, and suffering? Jesus revealed the attitude of God toward these as He went about doing good, healing the sick, the blind and the crippled. Is God mindful of human sorrow and grief? Jesus weeping at the grave of Lazarus is the answer. Does God care for men who are forgetful of righteousness and go away into sin? The answer is in Christ's story of the good shepherd searching for his sheep, and of that story which tells of the father waiting to welcome home the prodigal son from his wanderings. Is God interested in atoning for our sins, in taking away our guilt and removing the penalty of our wrong-doing? Christ dying on the cross is God's answer. "God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Is God concerned in the question of immortality and the life to come as it relates to the destiny of man? The reply is given in Christ's own resurrection from the grave and ascension into glory.

It is He who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Yes, Christ is the revealer of God. He is the way that leads to God. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He answers the soul's neediest cry, He comes to our rescue when all other helps fail. He is the divine Friend and Saviour and Redeemer and Brother.

It is well that we gather this evening under the open sky, softened by the twilight and brightened by the first out-peeping stars—here among the trees and flowers, embosomed close to nature's heart. But beautiful as nature is, she ignores our grief and mocks our sorrows unless beyond and above nature we discover God in Christ the Saviour. Nature is exacting, "red in tooth and claw," exacting and full of retribution. Nature does not forgive sins committed against her. Nature does not assuage the sufferings caused by an accusing conscience. Nature does not bring sweet peace and rest to the troubled soul. It is Christ who does this, the Christ who speaks of Himself as the Good Shepherd, and willingly lays down His life for the sheep.

The realization of God in Christ solves all the problems of the soul. Sometimes a crisis is necessary before we can realize the nearness of God and the meaning of His saving grace. Human anxiety and grief are not unmixed evils. Often in the midst of trial, the nearness of God is realized as it would be impossible to realize it in times of physical prosperity. This is clearly taught and illus-

trated in the Old Testament scriptures. Jacob, the patriarch, first entered into conscious communion with God when in his exile and loneliness he lay down to sleep with no roof but the stars, his head resting on a stone. Then he had a vision of the ladder that connected earth and heaven. Daniel in the lion's den was conscious of the presence of God's angel ; and when the three faithful young Hebrews, because of loyalty to their best thought concerning Jehovah, were cast into the burning fiery furnace, one like unto the Son of God was seen walking with them. Peter in prison was touched by the angel, who led him forth to safety. Paul on the storm-beaten ship was spoken to by the angel of God and given assurance of deliverance. John in exile on the Isle of Patmos was visited by the triumphant Saviour, the Sovereign of the Universe.

As the night brings out the stars and reveals them to us, so out of life's densest trials often shines for us the finest radiance. In the stressful times in which we now live, it ought not to be difficult for us to pass beneath the superficial and temporary things of life to find God as our support and comfort. The present world conditions reveal in a most startling way how faulty and unsatisfying are all the best and richest things that men usually count valuable. Wealth, position, influence, and power, do not count for much when the very foundations of civilization are being shaken, unless one has a consciousness of the nearness of God.

Possibly there has never before been a time in

the history of the world when more people were realizing the presence of God and entering into personal and confidential relations with Jesus Christ than at this present day. It is a time when in many lands many men and women are in search of life's permanent values and are finding that they exist only in God. The test which is now being applied to the young manhood of America is also a summons to a new and more vital faith in God, and to a fresh consideration of the claims of Christ. The soldiers who hear me now are beginning to know what it costs to answer their country's utmost call. They felt it when they left home to come to the army camp—and the memory of it they will never lose. Young men, there was much that you had to leave behind, but there is more that you can carry with you and which no power can take from you; there is much that is still your own present possession if you have Christ and all that Christ signifies to the soul. During the past week many thousands of homes, under the exercise of the selective draft, have begun to experience the first sharp pangs of war's relentless demands. There is a great seriousness over our people throughout the land; and if there is a single spot where it does not prevail, surely it ought not to be so. This nation-wide seriousness of soul offers unparalleled occasion for us to give God an unhindered chance in our lives. It would be our nation's greatest day if in this season of anxious thought all fathers and mothers and friends would receive the mothering

comforts of the grace of God, and if all the young men who have been called to come to the colors would first crown Christ as king in their hearts. And it ought not, it ought not to be otherwise.

Once by the Sea of Galilee, in the evening hour, looking upon the multitudes who had waited on His words, but were now hungry, tired and far from home, Jesus was moved with compassion toward them as sheep scattered and shepherdless. Commanding that they sit down on the grass He multiplied the few loaves and fishes into a sufficiency to feed them all. Here in this spacious park, surrounded by the trees and near the water's edge, in the sweet peacefulness of this evening hour I believe that Jesus Christ is in our midst. All who need God and desire to know Him may at this moment, before we go, find the Father through Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life. Conscious of the stressfulness of this hour, with eyes on the future whatever it may have in store for us, speaking in advocacy of all life's holiest and sweetest interests and voicing the desires and longing and prayers of many loyal hearts that love us who are now here gathered, I press the claim and call of Christ our Redeemer—I press His invitation and proclaim His promise—"Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

IV

WHEN YE PRAY

"AFTER THIS MANNER, THEREFORE, PRAY YE:

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
In earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
glory, forever. Amen.*" —MATT. 6:9-13.

OUT of our Lord's divinely rich life of prayer there emerges as from an ocean this pearl of great price. To His people He gives this crystal of devotion as a perpetual possession which can never lose its luster through long years of daily use while its preciousness and beauty shall become more and more manifest to each successive generation. It is hardly true that Jesus designed this prayer as a rigid formula which we should follow with slavish precision, but from His own words, "After this manner therefore pray ye," we may judge that He gave it as a model in which He maps out for us the realm of prayer and lays

down the general lines along which our requests should be made. It has nothing in common with the prayer-wheels in use in some oriental lands which are but blocks of wood constructed in the shape of wheels upon spindles, on which petitions are inscribed, and which the pious devotee whirls around with a string, supposing that each rotation is a prayer with which God is pleased. We should think of it rather as a sort of prayer microcosm reflecting in miniature the entire world of prayer, as a dewdrop impictures within itself the whole encircling sky.

THE FORM

This is the model prayer with regard to form. First it is simple, being the plain, unadorned expression of the heart's desire in contrast to the vain "repetition," and "much speaking" which characterized the prayers of the formalist.

It is brief, containing within itself the root-stem of well-nigh every petition which a devout soul could wish to make, while, as has been truly said, it is "as copious in meaning as it is condensed in expression."

It is direct, reminding one of the psalmist's words, "I will direct my prayer unto thee and look up."

Again it is universal in its scope, covering every want of man, and befitting every time and place.

And it is orderly, containing two clearly marked divisions—the one general, the other particular—the general standing first, the particular second.

THE SUBSTANCE

As it relates to substance this prayer is a model. In the first of the two divisions into which the seven petitions fall we are taught to seek the things of God first, while our own wants are afterward presented.

Notice in the first division that the subjects of petition are "thy name," "thy kingdom," and "thy will." There is for the time a complete erasure of self, while the worshipper is absorbed in the thought of God. Being so near to the throne the adoring soul forgets its own little needs in contemplation of the divine thoughts and purposes.

In the second division there are four personal petitions in which are pleaded our great representative needs: "Give us," "Forgive us," "Lead us," "Deliver us." These make the fourfold prayer-cry of the suppliant soul.

In the first division there is manifest the filial spirit in the words, "Our Father," while running through the four requests of the second division the fraternal spirit appears in the oft repeated word "us."

Evidently this is a specimen of social prayer rather than of secret prayer, and implies that we should pray with each other and for each other, and not for ourselves alone.

THE ATTITUDE

Once more this is seen to be the model prayer, because of the various attitudes which the wor-

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shipper is represented to assume in his approach to the throne of grace. These attitudes as discovered in the invocation and seven petitions are eight in number, and give us a series of living pictures of the soul in its eager quest of God.

A glimpse at the prayer will reveal :

- (1) The child addressing his Father : "Our Father which art in heaven."
- (2) The worshipper adoring his God : "Hallowed be thy name."
- (3) The subject avowing his King : "Thy kingdom come."
- (4) The servant submitting to his Master : "Thy will be done."
- (5) The pensioner entreating his Benefactor : "Give us this day our daily bread."
- (6) The sinner imploring his Saviour : "Forgive us our debts."
- (7) The pilgrim supplicating his Guide : "Lead us not into temptation."
- (8) The struggler appealing to his Defender : "Deliver us from evil."

THE INVOCATION *"Our Father which art in heaven"*

In Luke it is said that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Certainly they made application to the right source, for He, of all others, knew how to do what He was asked to teach others to do. In response to their appeal He said,

“When ye pray say, ‘Our Father.’” Thus He imparted to them His own password to the courts of heaven. He put into their hands the golden key to the eternal treasure-house. With Him God was no mere influence or force, or impersonal, unloving first cause.

The thought of God as our Father is presented with seeming temerity, in a few passages in the Old Testament. But how different is the language of the Gospels! “Our Father.” It is a name that Jesus does not tire of repeating. Upwards of ninety times He strikes its lofty music, as though by reiteration He would fix the holy word within the heart of the world, and when across the spaces betwixt heaven and earth He flings this blessed name, the distance vanishes and even the dread silences grow musical.

Of Count Tolstoi, his biographer says, “He prays regularly and ardently, but he does not believe in a personal God,” a statement which would seem to be not only meaningless but absurd. It certainly does not conform to the teachings of Jesus regarding prayer. He makes the fact of the loving fatherhood of God the starting point of prayer, and drills His disciples on that word as a *class* in music is set to practice the scales; “for as he who has practiced well the scales has acquired the key to all harmonies, so he who has learned well the ‘Father’ has learned the secret of heaven, the *sesame* that opens all its doors and unlocks all its treasures.”

In the same chapter in Luke in which this prayer is recorded, He points out the basis of prayer in the love and faithfulness of God as Father, and upon this makes a pledge explicit and binding. In this great argument He says the last word that can be said on the subject of prayer :

“ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? ”

Here is a threefold command, rising in climactic intensity : “ Ask,” “ Seek,” “ Knock.” Here are three supplemental promises : “ It shall be given you ; ” “ Ye shall find ; ” “ It shall be opened unto you.” These commands and promises are strengthened by three general declarations : “ Every one that asketh receiveth ; ” “ He that seeketh findeth ; ” “ To him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Then follows an illuminative series of three brief questions, directed at that most constant and universal quality of the human heart, parental faithfulness, and making an irresistible appeal for answer. Finally, the whole question is

appealed to the heavenly Father: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The "How much more" measures the distance between us and God. It contrasts our love and His love, our weakness and His strength.

The prayer argument is thus built up on command, promise, declaration, interrogation, and contrast. Three commands, three promises, three declarations, three questions, rising in cumulative grandeur into an appeal to the fatherhood of God! The thought is repeated to the twelfth time, and then emphasized with the emphasis of human and divine love. This is the twelve-stranded prayer-cord that reaches to the throne.

Just as the Ten Commandments fall into two parts, the former setting forth our duty to God, the latter to our neighbor; so this prayer naturally separates into two divisions; and it is instructive to note that the first section relates to God, His glory and His kingdom; and those come afterward, as being of less importance, which relate to ourselves. There are seven petitions; and on this seven-stringed harp a rhythmic music is rendered, in which there is a sweet blending of the wants of earth with the wealth of heaven, the grief of time with the glory of eternity, and the sorrow of men with the solace of God. The first three petitions are general and their key-word is *thy, thy, thy*; the remaining group of four are particular and human, centering around the word *us, us, us, us*.

FIRST PETITION
“*Hallowed be thy name*”

It is well known that Hebrew names generally were significant, denoting something concerning the character or history of the person named. This was particularly true with regard to the divine names, which were held in great reverence, one of these names being considered so holy that it was thought wrong even to repeat it. This petition may be thought of as corresponding to the first four commandments ; since, if it were to find complete fulfillment, it would do away with paganism, idolatry, and profanity, and would secure the proper observance of the Sabbath which was instituted as a means of hallowing the Holy Name.

How great is this petition ! How sweeping and comprehensive ! When once we realize that God is our Father, how ardently we wish, and how earnestly pray, that His name may be hallowed, held in reverence, and treated as holy, both by ourselves and by all others, in heart and thought, in word and deed.

SECOND PETITION
“*Thy kingdom come*”

To discover that God is the Father-King is for us to step up with Him into the kingdom. “*Thy kingdom come.*” This is a prayer and more than a prayer. It is tantamount to an oath of allegiance, a declaration of loyalty, a patriotic war-cry ; it is a motto fit to be emblazoned on the ban-

ner of the King's army in its march to victory. To pray this prayer sincerely is to be committed to the program of world-conquest. When our Lord put this prayer into the lips of the citizens of His kingdom, He did so with confidence in their devotion. He would have His citizens to be patriots. To be truly loyal to Him we must not only pray this prayer, but enforce it with our efforts and our gifts.

This petition is the missionary slogan. Missions are the progressive program of the kingdom and furnish the channel and measure of the true heavenly patriotism. "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession," are the terms of the divine compact upon which the heavenly kingdom rests.

Notice two words used, "inheritance," and "possession." Inheritance is that which one receives from his father's estate; possession that which he acquires by his own efforts. The heathen world already belongs to Christ as His inheritance, but not yet has He gotten possession of it. The missionary enterprise is Jesus Christ Himself in action, pressing His crown rights. He is getting possession of His inheritance, and every patriotic subject is summoned to the affray.

Enlargement is the watchword of Christianity and no one can truly pray "Thy kingdom come" whose soul is not swayed by the expansive power of a redemptive passion for all men throughout the world.

THIRD PETITION

"Thy will be done"

How far-reaching is this prayer! What changes, what revolutions, what overturnings it implies in business, in daily life, in politics! What aggressiveness in churches, what renovations in society, what upheavals in fortune, what breaking up of plans would be involved in the fulfillment of this prayer!

This petition implies three things: First, that we ourselves are willing to do God's will. For why should we pray for that which we are not willing to do? This petition contains prayer's essential. It is the touchstone of prayer. Some people have an idea that prayer is urging our wishes on God, and that He answers us only in giving us what we desire. But it may be more truly said that prayer is the meeting and harmonizing of God's will and man's, and its deepest expression is not, "Do thou this because I desire it, O Lord," but, "I do this because thou desirest it, O Lord." He who taught us to pray this prayer Himself said, "My meat is to do thy will," and in the depths of Gethsemane and under the shadow of the cross, He prayed, "Not my will but thine be done." Submission of this kind becomes the very spring of all life and gives every task and every trial a new transfigured significance. To do the will of God, whatever that may be, should be the one aim of life.

On one occasion a noted minister was urged to accept an invitation to preach to a large audience. His reply was, "I have no ambition to preach to

ten thousand people, but to do the will of God," and he declined.

A second thing implied in this petition is that we are willing for God's will to be done in us and for us ; that is, we must wish to suffer God's will as well as do it. And here again we recall that he who taught us to pray this prayer, "Though he were a son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." With great profit we might all adopt the prayer of Augustine, "Grant that we may never seek to bend the straight to the crooked, that is, thy will to ours ; but that we may bend the crooked to the straight, that is, our will to thine."

There are many things in God's providence which we cannot understand, but we can pray this prayer which our Saviour taught us.

"And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
Where we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we shall say, 'God knew the best.' "

Again this petition expresses the wish that the whole world may do God's will as perfectly as the angels in heaven obey Him. Surely there is nothing greater or better for which we could pray ; for the will of God to be done in all the world as it is done in heaven would mean the cessation of sin, oppression and cruelty. It would mean filling the world with joy and peace and love.

To all the three foregoing petitions may be affixed the words "in earth, as in heaven," making them

apply separately to each of them, thus: Hallowed be thy name in earth, as it is in heaven. Thy kingdom come in earth, as it is in heaven. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. In heaven God's name is hallowed, His kingdom is acknowledged, His will is obeyed. When shall it be so on earth? For this we are commanded to pray.

FOURTH PETITION

“Give us this day our daily bread”

Our Lord here singles out this most common of our material wants as the specimen need of our physical life, teaching us that if the bread which comes to us in such a purely natural way must be sought for in prayer, then there is necessity for us to look through prayer to the giver of every good and perfect gift for all the things which we may need. By some there is shown an inclination to understand this as a prayer only for the heavenly bread or spiritual nourishment, but while this interpretation is allowable it would seem a pity to make it exclude prayer for material provision, since it would deprive us of one of the sweetest of privileges—that of casting our bodily wants in this brief prayer, by one simple request, upon our heavenly Father.

It is of interest to note that the complex word here rendered “daily” occurs nowhere else in all classical or sacred Greek, and this fact makes its meaning obscure. However, its best possible translation would seem to be “daily allowance,” so

that as pensioners on our heavenly Father's bounty we are to ask and receive day by day such allotment as is necessary for our sustenance, just as the Israelites, in their wanderings in the wilderness, each morning gathered enough manna to last them and their families through the day.

Such daily asking and receiving of the heavenly Father means that we are to live in continual consciousness of our utter dependence on Him. Such a life of faith will exclude worry and anxious care. When our Lord thus elevates this common daily recurring benefit into the realm of prayer, He throws a halo of divineness around it and shows us that there is no want, even of our physical being, which is shut out from the region of prayer. If we can talk to our heavenly Father concerning our need of daily bread, then certainly there is no necessity that we be silent as to aught else that will be for our good.

“Daily help for daily cross,
Daily gain in seeming loss,
Daily strength for daily strife,
Daily grace till close of life.”

FIFTH PETITION

“*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*”

There are many words used in the Scriptures in definition of sin. The Hebrew word frequently occurring has the root meaning, “to miss the mark.” Another very common word for sin means, pri-

marily, "to crush," or "to ruin," while still a third is defined, "to act treacherously," "to be faithless." Still another word appears as "transgress," "trespass," or "break a covenant." All these words are interesting as indicating the nature of sin. In this petition sin is spoken of as a debt and it presents it as an offense against God which demands reparation; as the debtor in the creditor's hand so is the sinner in the hands of God.

By embodying it under this figure in this prayer our Lord teaches us in the most emphatic manner that the primary and fundamental view of sin is that it is an offense against the heavenly Father's goodness. And so the forgiveness which this prayer directs us to seek, while it includes necessarily the removal from our own hearts of the stain of sin, refers primarily to the removal from God's mind of His displeasure against us on account of sin; or to carry the figure still farther, the prayer is that He will cross out from His book of accounts those entries of the debts which we are unable to pay.

But notice the condition of this prayer: "As we forgive our debtors." How terrible it is for an unforgiving man to pray this prayer. We ask God to forgive us in the same manner that we treat those who wrong us. In the parable of the unmerciful servant, he who had been forgiven ten thousand talents refuses to forgive his fellow servant who owes him one hundred pence. He who sought forgiveness for nineteen million dollars, a

sum impossible for him to pay, ruthlessly refuses to forgive his fellow servant who was unable to pay him the amount of about seventeen dollars, less than one-millionth part of the debt which the unforgiving man had owed his lord. Such is the startling contrast between the wrongs which men have done to us and the wrongs which we have done to God. Unless we forgive we cannot be forgiven. Our heavenly Father wishes to see His own forgiving spirit repeated in the hearts of His children whom He forgives. To ask Him to do for us what we ourselves refuse to do for others is an insult to Him.

So great is the stress put upon this that immediately after the close of the prayer it is the one point to which our Lord reverts to assure us solemnly that the divine procedure in this matter of forgiveness will be exactly what our own is. “For if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.”

SIXTH PETITION

“And lead us not into temptation”

This should not be thought of as a prayer against being tempted at all, since God often brings His people—as He did Abraham and Christ Himself—into circumstances of trial designed to test the strength of their faith, and in doing so promises that we shall not be tempted above that we are

able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it. The true import of the petition seems to be that it is a prayer against being drawn into temptation by our own evil desires, since, as James tells us, "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." God does not tempt us to sin, but He does test us for our good. Satan tempts us to sin, and tries us in order to injure us. When Satan tries us, he tries us in order to increase our weakness and develop our wickedness; but when God tries us, He tries us to increase our strength and develop our faith.

The word "lead" here used means "drawn in" as if by a sucking whirlpool, and well describes the danger to which we are ever exposed and against which we ought constantly to pray. Christ warned His disciples, saying, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." This warning, however, Peter evidently failed to heed, and, in spite of difficulties and of his own accord, pressed into the palace hall of the high priest where, once having been sucked into the maelstrom of temptation, he quickly fell into sin.

"I saw then in my dream, so far as this valley reached, there was on the right hand a very deep ditch; that ditch is it into which the blind have led the blind in all ages, and have both there miserably perished. Again, behold, on the left hand there was a very dangerous quag, into which, if even a good man falls, he finds no bottom for

his foot to stand on ; into that quag King David once did fall, and had no doubt therein been smothered, had not he that is able plucked him out.

“ The pathway was here also exceeding narrow, and therefore good Christian was the more put to it ; for when he sought, in the dark, to shun the ditch on the one hand, he was ready to tip over into the mire on the other ; also, when he sought to escape the mire, without great carefulness he would be ready to fall into the ditch. Thus he went on, and I heard him here sigh bitterly ; for besides the danger mentioned above, the pathway was here so dark that ofttimes when he lifted up his foot to go forward, he knew not where or upon what he should set it next.”

To all who are confronted by temptation as just described, it is an unspeakable comfort to know that He who taught us to pray, “ Lead us not into temptation,” “ hath Himself suffered being tempted,” and is able to succor them that are tempted.

SEVENTH PETITION *“But deliver us from evil”*

This is the prayer for deliverance not only from the evil one, but from all evil, temporal and spiritual; not only from sin but from all its consequences, finally and fully. Prayer is our surest defense against the evil one and the evil influences in which he seeks to entangle us.

“ Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian’s armor bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.”

Once more to the Bedford Dreamer, who knew well the value of prayer, we turn for a description of the place of prayer in the struggles of one who sets out to fight the good fight of faith: “About the midst of this valley I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also hard by the wayside. Now, thought Christian, what shall I do? And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises (things that cared not for Christian’s sword, as did Apollyon before), that he was forced to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon, called All-prayer; so he cried, in my hearing, O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.”

THE DOXOLOGY

“ *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen*”

The prayer is concluded with this beautiful doxology. “For.” Here in this one word we find the reason why we can come boldly to the throne of grace. Here we are told why God can answer all this prayer. “Thine is the kingdom.” He is the king; the kingdom belongs to Him and He gives like a king. To what heights does this prayer bring us! Our Father is the king, and we have been standing in His throne room, speaking

with Him in confidence. Surely this is what is meant by coming boldly to the throne of grace.

“And the power.” Our Father-King has the ability to grant the requests of His children. Absolute omnipotence belongs to Him. He can do what He will.

“And the glory.” The heavens declare the glory of God, but even there it does not shine so brightly as in answering the prayer of those who come to Him in faith, doubting nothing. Here, then, we have our Lord’s interpretation of the meaning of prayer. He assures us that there is no circumstance of our life, no department of our being, that lies beyond its range. How much we miss by failing to join in with His interpretation of it. If only through the common events and common tasks of life we would but run the golden thread of prayer, we should discover life moving along a calmer, higher level. By incorporating this prayer into our lives it would

“Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.”

V

THE LIFE OF POISE

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace; long-suffering, kindness, goodness; faithfulness, meekness, self-control."

—GALATIANS 5:22, 23.

THE resemblance of Christian character appears not in the cold, graceful lines of statuary which are solely the product of the artist's skill, but in the tree whose fruitfulness results from the union of toil with the productive forces which work in nature. We do not create apples, but produce them through culturing apple-trees. Thus, by engaging the creative energies for purposes of fruitfulness, we become workers together with God. The same is true in the production of character. It is not created by command, nor formed by fiat, but produced by processes. It is attained in the degree to which we submit to Christianizing forces. That is to say, we must get in line with Christ by responding to whatever meanings of Christ the Spirit of God brings home to the conscience.

The initial step in the Christian experience is the acceptance of Christ, when the attention is fixed on Him as Saviour and Redeemer. This regenerating recognition of Christ must mark the beginning of

every Christian life. Only from this germinal start can the Christian character grow. Moving out from this experience, which is commonly called conversion, it is our privilege to "proceed upon Christianity," as Dr. Chalmers put it, which is only another way of saying, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

In these two terms, "receiving Christ," and "walking in him," is epitomized the whole story of growth in grace. To receive Christ and walk in Him furnishes us with the only complete life-program, which may be summarized as follows: In all our changing circumstances we are to bring together and relate to each other two facts—the fact of Christ and the fact of life. And in so far as we do bring together the fact of Christ and the fact of life, applying to our own circumstances the principles which He applied to the circumstances of His life, so far will all our relations and affairs be made harmonious, hopeful, joyous. This is the Christian calling. This is Christian living. This standard, however, we can never hope to reach apart from the aid of the Holy Spirit, whose office is to take "the things of Christ" and show them to us, and also to guide us into all truth. Accordingly we are commanded to be "filled with the Spirit," to "walk in the Spirit," and to "live in the Spirit;" and are promised that we shall be "led by the Spirit," and bring forth the "fruit of the Spirit;" that is, reproduce in our lives those elements of character which distinguished the life of

Christ. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

In our verse is catalogued the elements which make up a divinely organized character. These nine virtues, which are called the fruit of the Spirit, seem to stand in three groups. The first group—love, joy, peace—expresses the soul's divine relations; the second group—long-suffering, kindness, goodness—outlines the soul's social relations; while the third group—faithfulness, meekness, self-control—defines the personal relations, or subjective states.

I. First, we have described our relations to God, in love, joy, peace—the fruit which grows on the first branch of the tree of Christian character.

LOVE

The love here mentioned is that which is shed abroad in our hearts by Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

As the growing cherry blushes into ripeness under the touch of the sunshine, so the heart glows with love in contemplating the divine love. "We love Him because He first loved us." The source and glory of all true love is the love of God. Of this all other loves are but an echo. God commendeth His love toward us in that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." By bringing the heart up to the fact of this love of Christ for

us, until there is full response to its meaning, we find ourselves ensphered within it. We sometimes speak of "love at first sight," but often it comes another way. Two young people may be thrown together in frequent fellowship, their association not passing beyond the sphere of friendship, but one day this fellowship ripens into intimacy, and the sober servant "friendship" makes way for the master passion "love." They had seen each other's faces for years, and they remained companions; but catching a glimpse of each other's heart, they are transformed into lovers. Thus love may waken into being through intimacy. Says Simon Peter of Christ, "Whom not having seen ye love." Here is a love born not by gazing upon Christ's face, but by communion with Him in spirit. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." If only we may enter into intimacy with the Spirit of our Lord, love will waken into being and song. Thus by combining the fact of the loving Christ with the fact of life, we may be lifted to a new plane whereon love, the fruit of the Spirit, may grow and ripen. From love like this, between the soul and its Lord, will arise and flow love for our fellows. Thomas à Kempis said "the fathers were strangers to the world, but near to God, and were His familiar friends." But a more intelligent experience of the divine love will more accurately express itself by saying, "I will be not a stranger, but a friend to the world, because I am near to God, and because I am His familiar friend."

Joy

The second fruit of the spirit is joy. A father and his little son were passing by a newly finished bridge just as the workmen were removing the temporary props. The little boy said, "Papa, what are they taking away the props for? Won't the bridge fall?" "No," said the father, "the bridge will not fall. They are taking out the props so the bridge can settle down on the solid stone piers." Sometimes God allows our temporary props to be removed in order that we may settle down on Him. Earthly joys are fleeting, but in His presence is fullness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures forevermore.

"Oh, could we but relinquish all
Our earthly props, and simply fall
On Thine almighty arms."

Though writing from prison, Paul uses the word joy or rejoice eighteen times in his brief epistle to the Philippians. The secret of this prison joy is found in his consciousness of the divine presence. While the source of this joy is faith in Christ and love to Christ, its element is the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God is joy in the Holy Ghost. Apart then from fellowship with God there can be no real joy, whatever may appear to be such is only a counterfeit. A test of real joy is that, instead of being hindered by suffering, it is enhanced. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against

you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad." And again "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." It is this joy which sustains in the midst of trials when all other supports fail. Just as more patients are said to get well on the sunny side of the hospital than on the shady side, and as the fruit is best and sweetest which ripens in the sun, so keeping ourselves in the love of God we may rejoice with exceeding joy, knowing that the "Spirit of Glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon us." This joy results from the Spirit resting upon us. It is He who controls our hardships and trials, changing them into ministries of beauty and grace. As the leaping waters of Niagara are made to generate electrical power, which a man may use to engrave a name upon a jewel, so the Glory Spirit can so employ the turbulent sorrows of life as to write our Father's name upon our hearts. "Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice."

PEACE

Another fruit of the Spirit is peace. Digging down to the very roots of this word we find its primary meaning is "perfect joining." When there is peace nothing works out of its place. All is harmony. Sometimes in an organ there is a movement called "ciphering," which is the sounding of a pipe independently of the action of the player, on account of some derangement. There can be no harmony unless all the notes are obedient to the organist's touch. If a note breaks out on

its own accord, the harmony is broken, and there is a jarring discord. How like organs we are, and how disorganized we sometimes become. Harmony in our lives is dependent upon the coöperation of all our powers, but very often, oh, too often, the harmony is interrupted by the ciphering of some note. Some faculty breaks away from the control of the will, and the player cries out, "I can't control my temper," "I can't control my imagination," or "I can't control my grief;" but there is help. "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Look to Him. Bring the fact of Christ, who is our peace, to bear upon the inharmonious facts of your life, and receive the fulfillment of promise, "I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me."

II. Next we have three elements of character which constitute the Christian's proper attitude toward his fellows: long-suffering, kindness, goodness—the fruit of the second branch of the character tree.

LONG-SUFFERING

This fine word possibly more than any other portrays Christ's bearing toward men during His earthly ministry. "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth right-

eously." Following this example left by the Saviour, we reproduce in our own lives that long-suffering which is a fruit of the spirit. This may be done by considering and emulating the conduct of Jesus as He passed through the varying, trying experiences which He endured in common with other men. What ought to be our attitude toward the long-suffering of Jesus is illustrated in good old William Tyndale's prologue to Exodus, where he makes this fine, quaint comment upon the long-suffering of Moses: "Marke the longesoferinge and softe pacience of Moses and how he loveth the people and is evere betwen the wrath of god and them and is readye to lyve and dye with them and to be put out of the boke that God had written for their sakes, and how he taketh his owne wrongs patientlie and never avengeth himsylf."

KINDNESS

Here is a further characterization of what ought to be our relation to those around us. In Luke 6:35 we are told that the heavenly Father is kind to the unthankful and the evil, and His kindness is cited as a reason why we should love our enemies and do good to all. Furthermore we are taught that the exceeding riches of His grace are shown "in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." In Him we find our model of kindness—"Be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." We are to be kind then because God is

kind, and because Jesus has been kind to us. This holy ideal can be carried into the every-day life as a constant motive, yielding inspiration in the gentle doing of great things and small things alike. Indeed it may be formulated into a simple rule for daily life, such as Sidney Smith incorporated in the following resolution : "When I awake in the morning I will follow the purpose to make the day a happy one to some fellow creature." The rule is worth trying. If I make only one person happy every day, then if I live forty years, so doing for each day of those years, I will have made fourteen thousand six hundred human beings happy, at least for a time. Surely such a life could not be called a failure.

"The drying up of a single tear has more
Of honest fame than shedding seas of gore."

GOODNESS

Goodness is a grace whose very existence suggests our relation to others. It differs from kindness in lying back of it, serving as its source and basis. Sometimes we say of a great singer, "He is not musical, he is music." That is to say, he is not a mechanical performer, but the music is in him, springing up into boundless melody. Occasionally we say of a man, "He is not eloquent, he is eloquence." He does not possess the quality ; he himself is the substance. He is not reciting something which he has memorized, but the holy gift is moving within him like a mighty spirit or genius. And

so real goodness is not something superficial, external, vaporous, but strong, deep, permanent. John Ruskin has told us that one of the primary elements of beauty is the element of repose, but he is careful to explain that by repose he does not mean the weak passivity of a pebble lying on the roadside, but the repose of a mountain, with its protruding rocks revealing themselves like gigantic muscles. It is a repose that is suggestive of might, hinting of splendid power in reserve. Genuine goodness does not have the passivity of a pebble; it must display moral muscularity, and be suggestive of irresistible strength. Character that counts must be the ally of power, not held in reserve for itself, but ready to be expended on others.

“Good the more
Communicated, more abundant grows ;
The author not impaired but honored more.”

III. The three remaining graces in our catalogue—faithfulness, meekness, and self-control—may be classed as subjective. They inhere in him who holds himself responsive to the meanings of Christ, and constitute the government of his inner life. They are the fruit which grows on the third branch of the tree of Christian character.

FAITHFULNESS

The man who is faithful to himself must of necessity be faithful to others.

“ To thine own self be true,
And it must follow as night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

We all spend the greater part of our time alone. Ourselves are our most constant companions, and so the man who is unfaithful to himself has a constant quarrel going on in his own bosom. A skeleton in the heart is worse even than the skeleton in the closet. Conscience is the protest of the better self, when it has been abused and betrayed. After all has been said, the severest effects of sin fall back upon the sinner himself.

“ He that wrongs his friend
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears about
A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and himself
The prisoner, at the bar, ever condemn’d.”

Sir Walter Scott furnishes one of the best examples of a man who kept faith with himself. With financial ruin staring him in the face, his health undermined by overwork, rather than allow his creditors to suffer on account of debts for which he was not really responsible, he went on “ writing like a tiger,” until he worked himself to death. “ Though I lose everything,” he said, “ I will at least keep my honor unblemished.” Broken in health, he returned to Abbotsford to die. One of the last things he uttered was indeed worthy of a man who had kept faith with himself. “ I have been,” he said, “ perhaps the most voluminous author of my day, and it is a comfort to me to think

that I tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principles, and that I have written nothing which on my death-bed I shall wish blotted out." His last injunction to his son-in-law was, "Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be virtuous, be religious, be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."

MEEKNESS

"Blessed are the meek" is the beatitude pronounced by our Lord on the possessors of this charming virtue. Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is strength, calm and serene.

"He feels he has a fist, then folds his arms
Cross-wise, and makes up his mind to be meek."

"I am meek," says Jesus. Certainly we do not detect anything fawning and cowardly about Him. Meekness is self-suppression issuing in gentle service. The meek and quiet spirit is, in the sight of God, of great price.

SELF-CONTROL

Self-control is courage held in reserve, and may be regarded as the essential element of character. No man is morally free who fails to master his desires. The moment a man throws the reins to his impulses and passions, that moment he yields up his moral freedom. In the book of Proverbs praise is accorded not to the strong man, who "taketh a city," but to the stronger man who

“ruleth his own spirit.” Alexander subdued the world around him, and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, yet he fell a victim of his passions and came to a premature death. Nothing more quickly works one’s undoing than to loosely yield to the current of desire, and it not only weakens one’s character, but puts one at great disadvantage in the eyes of others. The story is told of a rich young man, who was at a dinner table with a number of friends and babbled drunken foolishness through the entire evening. One of his friends was a stenographer, who, seized by an idea for the good of his friend, made a stenographic report of every word that the latter uttered. The next day he had these notes transcribed and sent to the man himself, who was greatly shocked, being scarcely able to believe that he had fallen to such a level of imbecility, and said, “If this is the way a man talks when he is drunk, I mean to keep sober hereafter.”

“O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ousrels as ither see us !
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion.”

This power to see ourselves and to control ourselves comes by yielding to the mastership of Christ in our lives. By thus receiving Him and the fullness of His Spirit, we are empowered to live the overcoming life, bringing every thought and desire into docile submission to His will.

I have a friend, who, as a young man, was impatient and petulant, excitable and fiery. But a great change has been wrought in his life by the subduing power of grace. To-day he is tender, thoughtful and considerate. Even yet, underneath his sweetness and gentleness there is the heat of a flaming volcano. The triumph of his life is that through high self-discipline he has converted the fire into a central glow and motive power, instead of permitting it to waste itself in useless outbursts of passion.

The Arabs have a saying about the palm tree that it stands with its feet in salt water, while its head is in the sun. They often cannot drink the brackish water found in the oasis where the palm tree grows, but they tap the tree, and drink its sweet palm wine. The environments of the palm tree seem hostile to its growth, but with the magic of its inner life it changes the elements found in the unkindly soil and air around it so that they minister to its growth and strength and fruitfulness. So you and I often standing in the mire and bitterness of sin, and surrounded by an uncongenial atmosphere, with the fierce heat of temptation beating upon our heads, may in spite of all these things be able to grow strong, subduing the evil and conserving the good, if within us there is at work the laboratory of a new life through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ. In this way we live the Christ-life, and bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Thus may we bring the fact of Christ to bear on the fact of life, and in so doing we are "changed

into his image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." He is more than the memory of a moving picture projected on the screen of human history. He is God come into human life interpreting Himself to us in terms of human experience. If we permit Him He will reveal and interpret Himself to us in our own experiences. There is no necessity that we attempt to climb up to Him since He has already descended to us. All that is needful for us to do is to receive Him and let Him live within us.

After avowing that he had parted with what he called his "cradle-faith," a certain modern agnostic made the following sorrowful confession, "We have seen the sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth; we have felt in utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead." In contrast to this utterance of despair set the fact of the present Christ. He is not dead. He lives, and the universe is full of His glory. He is near thee now and waits to tell thee the sweet story of His love as though there were no other soul to woo beneath the stars. Listen to Him, and His winsome story shall wind its wonderful way around Himself and Bethlehem and thee, around Himself and Calvary and thee, around Himself and heaven and thee. He will tell thee of His agony and tears; He will show thee the scars He received in the quest of thy redemption; He will impart to thee the life of peace and poise; He will point thee to the glory that shines for thee in the beyond.

VI

THE MINISTRY OF SUFFERING

“That the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”—1 PETER 1:7.

IN Christianity the problem of pain is grandly grappled with in the strength of the soul's relation to Christ by faith. Much suffering is assuredly due to the misdeeds of the sufferer himself; other suffering is as certainly due to conditions required for our full discipline. For the Christian, however, a new light shines on this vexed problem. In His teachings and life and death, Christ offers a new interpretation of pain. In the verse just quoted, human suffering has been compared to the fining-pot of precious metals. Faith is tested by trial as gold is proved by fire. The word “proof of faith” refers not so much to the process as to the product—the result of the process, that which remains after the process is completed. Deposit or precipitation more nearly expresses the meaning.

What is the deposit left in the soul by pain? What is its effect? Often physical pain records its processes in the body in scars, deformity, paralysis.

Is a similar record of suffering left in the soul? Too often under long pain the soul is left morbid, callous, indifferent. Sometimes under long affliction unbelief and rebellion are sublimated in the heart, crystallized and insoluble. This is generally true when pain is endured with no thought of God. When the soul has made her nest and her home here below, has gazed on her beloved object insatiably, has used the world as if she possessed it entirely—some hour when all is fair and serene, in the midst of much treasure laid up for many years, comes the fatal stroke unlooked-for, unaccountable, irremediable, then the life is embittered and poisoned. Despair mingled with protest and censure seizes the feelings. An example of this sad experience is shown in the words engraved on the tomb of a beloved child: "The miserable parents ventured their all on this frail barque and the wreck was total." What blight and disappointment; what decay and death are back of such a confession.

Over against this sad inscription let this pronouncement be set: "That the proof of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." What fine words are these: "praise" and "glory" and "honor"! They tell the character of the precipitations, deposited through the process of suffering, in the soul which is allied with Christ by faith and is looking joy-

ously for His appearing. Let us inquire wherein the Christian's manifold temptations turn out to praise and honor and glory.

Constituted as we are and living in the world in which we do live, suffering is necessary to our highest development. Man is really made for action, for heroic achievement, for service and sacrifice. There is something in us far deeper than the desire for easy-going pleasure and passive self-indulgence. It is not to taste sweet things but to do noble and true deeds, that the real man dimly longs for. Those of whom this is not true are effeminate and unworthy. Pain is the goad which compels men to a carefulness they would not take and to toils they would not otherwise endure. The upward climb of the race and its conquests of earth and sea and sky, with its constant advancement in knowledge and power and skill, are greatly motived by pain. But for the sharp strokes of pain, men would not rise. These things are true in a general way, particularly are they true for the Christian. Given a world of sin and suffering, if one loves others he must suffer and he can but choose to suffer. We are so made that we cannot be wholly happy in selfishness. Some companionship in suffering then is necessary if we are to be let into the high privilege of helping another in his dark hours. If we would be freed from all suffering on behalf of others we must be content to be left out of the circle of sympathy and companionship. In this world of ours we are everywhere knit up with

other lives, lives that must suffer. If we are not willing to suffer with them we must be cut loose from them. In Gethsemane Jesus, humanity's Man, put the question to those who would be His companions, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" The finest people whom we have ever known are those who have suffered deeply. There are some men and women who have had but little pain, disappointment or sorrow, but these are never men and women of the high and noble and tender spirit. They rarely see visions or dream dreams; their voices are never tremulant with hope and joy in God. You must go to those who have long companioned with pain to see the wide horizon of patient thought, to hear the noble music of the enlightened heart, and to enter a world of sweetness and beauty of which the coarser, undisciplined ones have never dreamed.

In one of Elizabeth Hastings' books, Janet, who has been inclined to quarrel with life, has suffered a great sorrow in the sudden death of her noble lover. A friend goes to her to speak what comfort she can but expecting to find her still more bitter than before. "'Do you know,' she said, 'the sorrow almost rests me? I have had so much of the bitter and meaningless pain. Perhaps my quarrel with life is over.' 'But this is so inexplicable,' I cried, taking the girl's hands in mine and forgetting that I was there to comfort her. 'It doesn't need to be explained, because it hurts, and the hurt is life, and life is good. Oh, I tell you,' she added proudly,

drawing her hands away and going over to seat herself by the window ; ‘ it is only when you are standing outside, looking at life, talking about it and thinking about it, that you can say it is cruel. When you are really living, the very hurt is glorious.’’ By lifting all this into the realm of faith and fellowship with Christ, pain indeed is sure to result in praise and glory and honor.

But we miss entirely the Christian interpretation of suffering and its results if we forget that the highest suffering is when we suffer for others. It has been said truly that the world lives by the vicarious death of the just and innocent. The best that we have and are we owe to the willingness of the unselfish, the strong and the pure to offer themselves in sacrifice for us. The history of mankind is the history of martyrdom. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah delineates the upward path of human progress. There the suffering servant freely offers his life as a ransom for others. The hearts that suffer most are the hearts that most feel the weight of others’ sorrows and needs. Said a friend to a young missionary who had been speaking of his wakeful, restless nights after his long ministry to the poor and sorrowing : “ Why, I should think your good work of the day would make your pillow soft and refreshing at night.” The reply was : “ Oh, but the trouble with me is I carry a hundred aching hearts to bed with me every night and I cannot sleep for their sorrows.” A soul like that has entered into fellowship with Jesus, and

from Him draws inspiration and strength and glory and joy ; and after all, is not this sympathy, with its companion joy, about the sweetest and highest and holiest possession which one can have ? God wants to give us His best and He will give His best to those who will follow on to know Him. In Ralph Connor's beautiful story, the " Sky Pilot," he can bring to the rebellious sufferer, to whom he would minister, no deeper word than one that goes back again to the crucified Christ. And as he reads in Hebrews the passage, " We can see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor," he can only add: " You see, Gwen, God gave nothing but the best—to His own Son only the best." It ought to mean much to us that God opens to us something of this best to share with Christ.

There is a deep mystery about suffering, a mystery which we cannot understand now. " Papa, why do I have to suffer so ? " said a little boy to his father and this question has been asked countless times. We do know that extraordinary afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins but sometimes the trial of extraordinary graces. Job's friends, such as they were, insisted that his great afflictions were sent as just punishment of his sins. But God vindicated Job against this charge and demonstrated to all the world that the " trial of our faith worketh patience" and all the other Christian graces.

" Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and

Lazarus. When therefore he heard that he was sick, he abode at that time two days in the place where he was" (John 11: 5, 6).

Notice the "therefore." The record is not such as we should expect. Since Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus, it is a little surprising to read that therefore when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He abode still in the same place where He was. One would think that instead of abiding two whole days, He would have gone immediately. Why did He not go? Jesus gives us to understand that the delay was for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby; but wherein, do we ask, does the glory of God appear? Surely the picture is incomplete. We have not seen it all yet. Now read on. Look at the seventh verse: "Then after that he saith to the disciples, Let us go into Judea again." So the delay has an explanation. The "when" of human sorrow is to be followed by the "then" of God's glory. It is not safe to draw conclusions from partial views.

The Laocoön Group is one of the finest pieces of statuary in the world. In the highest degree attainable it expresses physical anguish. It portrays Laocoön, the Trojan priest, and his two sons as crushed to death by two huge serpents that came up from the sea. Entwined within the giant and deadly folds of the monsters, the father strains his strength to free himself and his children. In one of his poems Browning tells how an artist in Rome covered all the accessories in the Laocoön Group,

leaving exposed only the central figure of the father with neither sons nor serpents to denote the purpose of his mighty gesture. Then the artist stood by to hear the comments of the people who came to look upon the statuary. What would they make of the tremendous energy of those legs and arms, and the eyeballs starting from their sockets? With one exception the uninitiated multitude decided that it was "a yawn of sheer fatigue subsiding to repose," and the object of the sculptor must have been to portray a man on the point of falling to sleep. Only one spectator seized upon the truth —

"I think the gesture strives
Against some obstacle we cannot see!"

He did not announce his final judgment until he had seen the veiled parts of the figure. So let it be here. Jesus indeed loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, and when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He did indeed delay. But for the delay there was an adequate reason, and that reason is to be found in the glory of God. Now let us read it in this way: "Jesus loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus, whom therefore he heard of it, he remained, it is true; but, afterward, he said, Let us go." Waiting a little while, we discover the glory of God appearing in the resurrection of Lazarus, and then in the feast that was given to the Master whom Mary anointed His feet. And on through the centuries the glory of it all glows and grows.

“I do not see
Why God should e'en permit some things to be,
When He is love ;
But I can see,
Though dimly, through the mystery,
His hand above.”

“Wherefore we faint not ; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

I do not know how important and far-reaching our sufferings may be ; possibly they have a larger meaning than anything else that we experience in this world. In the plan of the loving heavenly Father, pain certainly has some meaning. Looking back to the cross of our Saviour we see that His intense suffering has proved fruitful of glorious results, even greater than we can yet know. He died in apparent rejection and defeat, yet God raised Him up. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ and thus seems to bring a new note into this whole question, for it suggests that all suffering—certainly the suffering of Christians—may be made vicarious ; that is, in some way may count for the good of man. A poor

dog submitting to vivisection in a laboratory, strapped on a board and shrieking at his executioners, sees not a single redeeming ray in the whole terrible business. If his poor benighted mind could but catch a glimpse of what his sufferings mean with reference to the relief of the future sufferings of beasts and man, all that is heroic in him might acquiesce. Lying on his back, suffering great pain, he is performing a function vastly higher than any free, pleasure-seeking canine can do and yet this function is the one thing about the whole performance that must remain absolutely beyond his knowledge. In regard to the dog and his suffering, we see the world which is all invisible to him, because we live in two worlds while he lives in one. In like manner there is another world besides this, and in this other world we must look for the larger meaning and the fuller fruition of much that we experience here. At any rate, in the midst of our pain we will trust Him who holds our lives in His hands, believing that in some mysterious, glorious way we are partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

“ Ah, if we only knew it all, we should surely understand
That the balance of sorrow and joy is held with an
even hand ;
That the scale of success or loss shall never over-
flow,
And that compensation is twined with the lot of
high and low.”

From this thought we move on to another. It has been said that the greatest proposition of the Christian religion is that God is like Christ, that God is in Christ and is revealed in Him. We may believe then that there is in the heart of the world just such a love as Christ exhibited when He died on the cross; a love that suffers with men, unstinted and forevermore self-giving. The difference between the best that man can do and the perfect thing that Christ achieves, may be illustrated by a reference to the myth-enshrined Buddha. He was the son of a king, so the story runs, and gifted with great genius and physical beauty. His father was careful that he should not come in contact with the scenes of human sorrow and suffering. A beautiful princess became his wife. A gorgeous palace rose to receive him, within whose courts the sorrows of the world were not permitted to penetrate. He must know nothing of misery. All must be light, and beauty, and joy. But one morning the prince, with a large retinue, was driven through the eastern gate of the city, and met on the road an old man, broken and decrepit. His teeth chattered, his face was covered with wrinkles, his voice was but a feeble whine, and he supported his trembling limbs by leaning upon a stick. "Who is that man?" inquired Buddha. "He is small and weak, his body is wasted away, he is barely able to walk. Is there something peculiar in his family, or is this the common lot of all created beings?" "Sir," replied the servant,

"that man is sinking under old age. But this is not peculiar to his family. In every creature youth is defeated by old age. Your father, your mother, all your relatives, all your friends, will come to this sad state." The prince was greatly distressed. Twice more he drove out in his chariot, only to encounter on each occasion some wretched, suffering fellow creature. He grew troubled and melancholy. Finally he saw a dead body on the road, lying on a bier covered with a cloth. The friends stood about crying, sobbing, tearing their hair, covering their heads with dust, striking their breasts, and uttering wild moans. With great grief and uneasiness the great prince said: "Oh, let us turn back; I must think how to accomplish deliverance." And so he abandoned his kingdom, his power, his glory, his wife, and shut himself up in solitude to lead the life of an ascetic. Buddha's only remedy for the curses of human existence was to be found in fleeing from them. He would renounce life, he would not look upon its failures, so that in his solitude and self-imposed confinement he adopted the gospel of annihilation. Self-extinction was his panacea for the ills of this mortal state. He would deny sickness and sorrow. Existence must be regarded as a fatal illusion. And hence he announced the doctrine of Nirvana.

On the other hand, Jesus of Nazareth felt the misery of the world as keenly as Buddha. He went deeper into the sorrows of humanity than any

other has ever done. The desperate agony of embittered human life He understood to its very bottom. But He had a better way of meeting human misery than by preaching a philosophy which denies the reality of life. He came to bring consolation, and the power of endurance, and "the peace of God, which passeth understanding." He came to Bethany to weep. This is a marvellous fact which enchains the attention of the world. The Son of God shed tears—matchless exhibition of compassion, sweet and glorious truth! The Man of Sorrows is the Lord of Glory, for this is none other than God who is manifesting such sympathy; and He did not stop with weeping over men and for them. He Himself entered the depths of their suffering. Hear these blessed words: "I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and I lay down my life for the sheep." Yes, He is the good, the beautiful, the excellent shepherd, He is all that He ought to be as the one who cares for His people. Look at that expression again: "I lay down my life for the sheep." It means literally: I lay down my soul for the good of the sheep, in order to turn aside destruction from them by my own self-sacrifice. God's relation to us then is not an external one. He is no mere onlooker. He is our Father. In His Son He suffers with us and for us. Through suffering we may be brought into the deepest fellowship with Him, and acquiescing in His will, we can hear Him saying, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel."

In the late hours of a recent night the sleeping world was startled by the fearful gathering of heavy clouds and the burst of a terrific thunder-storm. In the midst of the thunder and lightning and wind and rain, a mocking-bird, nesting in a tree which stood near the house, carolled out one of her sweetest songs. While the elements raged, the sweet, gentle note continued. It was indeed a "song in the night"; so may the soul resting in the great central rest of God lift its song of praise in the midst of all life's pains and sorrows and keep on singing until the clouds disappear. The back-ground of the Sistine Madonna at Dresden, which is in some respects the most wonderful picture of mother-love which has ever been painted, for a long time was a dull black. An artist making some repairs discovered the cherubs' lovely faces in the grime of that dark background. Suspecting that the picture had been overlaid with dust by time and neglect, he commenced cleansing it. As he went on with his task cherub after cherub appeared until it was found that the Madonna was on a background made up entirely of fair faces of little cherubs. Too often we think of God as being surrounded by heavy clouds of mystery and awe,

but for those who follow the path pointed out by Christ, His face has more of love than that of a mother, nor is He surrounded by forbidding clouds of darkness, but with a light finer and brighter than that which shines from the faces of all the angels.

Whether then our pain be bodily or whether our sufferings be in the form of heart-sorrow, whether we grieve over things in life or whether the cause of our anguish be death, we ought to rejoice. We may be in heaviness through manifold trials, but through Christ the trial of our faith shall be found unto praise and glory and honor. We will not rebel under our burdens. We will no longer have a quarrel with life. "And we know that to them that love God, all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). Whatever our grief or anguish or pain may be, we may see it transfigured into beauty and glory as the parent hearts, grieving over the death of their daughter, looked beyond death and saw their beloved in glory, as expressed in these sweetly beautiful lines :

" She died in beauty, like a rose blown from its
parent stem ;
She died in beauty, like a pearl dropped from
some diadem ;
She died in beauty, like a lay along a moon-lit
lake ;
She died in beauty, like the song of birds amid
the brake ;

She died in beauty, like the snow on flowers,
dissolved away ;
She died in beauty, like a star lost on the brow
of day.
She lives in glory, like night's gems set round
the silver moon.
She lives in glory, like the sun amid the blue
of June."

VII

SOME EDUCATIONAL IDEALS AND VALUES¹

“That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth ; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.”—PSALM 144 : 12.

THIS beautiful sentence is the crowning touch of a pleasing picture of a prosperous and happy people. Following a description of the growing wealth, the strengthening institutions and the increasing patriotism, comes this portrayal of that which is most necessary in the life of a community—the education of the youth in a wholesome religious environment. The greatest asset of any community is its boys and girls, and its most vital task relates to their intellectual and moral training. In the educational question there are three equally interested groups: The Parents, the Teachers and the Pupils.

I. The noblest profession in the world is that of parenthood. The management of a bank, the running of a railway system or the directing of similar large enterprises, in point of tact, skill, energy and executive ability, may scarcely be compared with the rearing of a family of children. This occupa-

¹ A High School Commencement Sermon.

tion demands all the finest powers of head, hand and heart ; so true is this that, when the Creator would draw out the most perfect capabilities of a human soul, He places a helpless babe in the arms of a loving mother. The homes of a country make it what it is. The center of power for building up the nation in virtue, knowledge, religion and prosperity lies in the home. According to an ancient legend, the Garden of Hesperides, the Greek dream of Paradise, where grew the tree with golden apples for fruit, was guarded by four lovely maidens, named Brightness, Modesty, Chastity and Ministering. The Hesperides Garden of modern times is the home where grow the loveliest flowers and the richest fruits of character. The center of the home is the child. Because this is true the home is the genetic center from which emanate the influences that rule the world. Whatever strikes at the home deals a blow to all that is good. No higher or holier task is before us than the protection of the home and the home life. We may well rejoice that our homes are safeguarded as well as they are. Even to-day in America, where divorce laws are so lax, only one marriage in twelve is dissolved, which argues that people stay married because they want to stay married.

There is a beautiful story which runs as follows : In a humble home one morning an exquisite lily was discovered in a crystal vase on the table. The housewife, charmed with its fragrance and beauty, in order to see it more perfectly, threw open the

blinds and put up the curtains, when the fresh air and sunlight came streaming in. In this way the dust and disorder which prevailed in the room were revealed and the good woman began at once to sweep. As she swept she saw other things that ought to be done and through the day gave herself to the task of setting things in order. Thus did the charm of the growing lily work until a transformation was produced throughout the home. How like the influence exerted by the growing child whose training is the most sacred task which the parents can perform. The growing life of the child should be made the cue of all good house-keeping. Supreme care should always be taken to maintain in the home an atmosphere in which the physical, intellectual and spiritual life of the child may freely develop.

II. Of course the teacher is interested in the climbing life of the child. What a difficult, delicate, important work! It is, indeed, a sacred calling. In a quaint old book the following delineation of the teacher's character is given: "His eyes are lifted up to heaven; the best of books is in his hands; the law of truth is written upon his lips, and the world is behind his back; he stands as if pleading with men, and a crown of gold hangs over his head." This portraiture reveals four things worthy of earnest study: The teacher's vision, which must be as broad as the universe and as high as heaven. The teacher's equipment, which must be truth pure and unmixed, and a passion for

it. The teacher's twofold attitude—that of renouncing selfish gain and that of pleading with men—and, indeed, all great teachers have been great pleaders. And finally the teacher's reward—a crown which will shine with increasing splendor as his pupils gain in strength and service.

The sincere teacher cannot afford to neglect the teachings and methods of the Man of Galilee who, without contradiction, is the earth's supreme literary artist and the greatest teacher who has lived. In this estimate all have agreed, as does the testimony from the following artists and critics. Charles Dickens was the great master of pathetic style. When this novelist was asked what was the most touching story in literature he answered, "The story of the Prodigal Son." Samuel Coleridge took all knowledge as his province and his conversation was radiant with jewels of thought, yet, when asked for the richest passage in all literature, he replied, "The Beatitudes." Kean was a great actor and artist, but there was one passage so full of tears that he thought no man could properly render it—the one beginning, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Edmund Burke, the mighty statesman, said that the most impressive political document on the rights of man was "The Sermon on the Mount." There is no doubt but that in all literature the sentence best loved by children is Christ's "Suffer the children to come unto me"; the sentence best loved by men, in all stages of

life, the one beginning, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Surely Jesus is the teacher's norm in method, substance, spirit and manner of approach. A study of His methods will show that the teacher's mission is that of beautifying the waste places of life. This may often be a troublesome thing to do, but herein the honest teacher must dread to fail. Recently a traveller in Scotland, standing upon a mountain cliff overlooking the sea, found himself in great danger, for a gardener, who desired to beautify even the steep cliffs and precipices, had loaded his double-barrelled shotgun with seeds of flowers and vines and fired the seeds up into the crevices of the rocks. Some such procedure may be necessary in the case of some pupils, but the effort is worth making, if the seeds of thought be but planted to germinate in strong and beautiful life. To draw out the latent gift, to discover the unexpected capacity, to believe in the pupil even when he does not believe in himself—this is the test of the teacher; and to have this faith justified by the ripening mind and will—this is the teacher's great reward. Oftentimes the teacher's faith in the pupils kindles their loyalty to him. When Washington at Valley Forge was reviewing his tattered troops, he paused before one feeble regiment and said, "Gentlemen, I have great confidence in the men of Connecticut," and the narrator says, "When I heard that, I clasped my musket to my breast and said, 'Let them come on.'"

There ought to be the finest coöperation between parents and teachers. There is a fine old story about the sons of a certain primitive family which says that each son was left free to move along the beautiful shore of that stream that appealed most strongly to him. Among the increasing number and beauty of life's enriching streams each pupil should be directed or permitted to select the course along which his life will more readily reach its largest possibilities. Just here great care and thought should be exercised in regard to our graded system of schools. Each individual pupil should be taken into account. The parent does not surrender all responsibility when the child enters the school, but rather should make a home environment within which the child can best pursue the tasks allotted to him in the school. I plead for a closer bond of fellowship and union between the home and the schoolhouse. The teacher also should keep in mind that what is done for the child appeals strongly to the loving parents and is appreciated by them. Let the teacher remember that "he who takes the child by the hand takes the mother by the heart." In one of his oratorios, because the soloist's single voice is not equal to the sublime thought, Handel asks the full orchestra with drum and flute and trumpet and a score of stringed instruments to lend volume of sound, and borne upon the tides of melody the single voice is swept forward. In the same way let the home and the school, teachers, parents, friends and all

increase the tides of wholesome influence, impart intellectual stimulus, and hearten on with words of encouragement, the pupils who are striving for life preparation.

III. The Bible is, indeed, an old book, but it is not out of date. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Look at the terms here used descriptive of education. These two fine words, "growth" and "polish," tell the whole story of what true education must be. The one stands for internal development, the other for external culture. Growth without polish means running to the wild. Polish without growth means grinding down to the fine point of nothingness. The two must go together. Growth must not be restrained, but trained, and the training rightly done is true polish.

1. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth." Boys, then, are expected to grow. It is worth while to notice several things about the growth of plants as well as the growth of boys. True growth must spring from within. The tacking on process is false and fatal. That growth is best which is deep-rooted. A superficial grasp of principles must in the end meet with the fate of the seed which fell on the stony ground, which, because they had no root, were withered away. This must be the result of intellectual and moral growth which is not deep-rooted. Remember this rule: *Fruitage must ever depend on rootage.* And

then the proper growth of a good tree is straight and tall and upright; and so is the proper growth of boys.

Concerning boys a primary asset is the undeniable fact that they want to be men more than anything else in the world. This mighty manward impulse regnant in the life of the boy must be trained and utilized. It is a great pity for a boy to be hurried into manhood. It means that he grows faster than he ripens. Nor must he be held back unduly. The wild, complex life of the world is caged up in the system of the normal boy. To repress it too much is to seal up dynamite for future explosions. To train and direct it will mean triumph and character. To crush the fighting instinct in a healthy boy is to grow a coward. If it is allowed to run wild you produce a bully. Tame and train it and you have the strong, self-controlled man.

At the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo there was an odd piece of statuary done in bronze which showed an Indian mother kneeling by her little son near the stump of a forest tree. With one arm she was embracing her boy, while with the other hand she was pointing upward. The boy was gazing in the direction indicated by his mother. In one hand he held his bow, the other rested on the tightly drawn string which seemed about to send the long winged arrow skyward. On the stump were the words, "The Sun Vow." These bronze figures may well represent the training of the boy. It is the business both of parent and teacher to stay by him

in sympathy and love. To direct his aim, show him how to tighten the bowstring of determination and drive the arrow of aspiration upwards. In other words, the mission of the teacher and the parent is to induce the young savage to take the "Sun Vow."

But this can be accomplished only as the youth projects his life from a proper motive. It is a fine thing for a young man to allow his soul to respond always to the higher and nobler ideals. The historian astonishes us with the story of the hired Persian troops who went into battle driven by officers with swords and goads. The mercenaries conquered, not through love of a noble cause, but through fear of a cruel necessity. A nobler victory was that achieved by the Athenians who feared not to die for their native land because love for their beautiful city fired their hearts with enthusiasm and made their arms invincible. Young men, let it be your ambition to grow. To stop growing is to begin decaying.

"I say that man was made to grow, not stop."

Thus Robert Browning expresses a great truth. Consider your school days as the period of beginning for the larger growth and unfolding which you are to attain in after life. As you value your good name and all that is true and worthy, permit nothing to cut the roots of your faith, to nip the buds of your hope, or to induce decay at the center

of your being from which the expanding life forces should keep rising.

In Plato's famous parable of spiritual experience, two horses, one "noble and of noble origin," the other "ignoble and of ignoble origin," draw the chariot of the soul. One steed is ever eager to mount, the other wishes to descend, and the charioteer who guides these divergent passions keeps his course by fixing his eye on that "essence which is the only lord of the soul." Looking up to his ideal, the driver controls his errant steeds. It is a picture of the conflicting forces which threaten disaster to the life which you will have to live. If you fail to master the forces antagonistic to your better nature you will be dragged down. If you do master these forces, then the higher forces will lift you up into victory. Just here every young man needs help divine.

2. "That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." What a fine sentence! How nobly poetic, sweetly rhythmical, charmingly devout. In ancient architecture the corner stone was the most beautiful part of a building and the most highly ornamental. It gave tone and significance to the remainder of the edifice. It joined together the two most prominent walls where the greatest weight of the building rested upon it. What a lesson this teaches us about the great place which woman is divinely intended to fill in the social and domestic structure. After all has been said, true womanly character is the

corner stone of the best civilization. Please notice that it is a palace, not a public building. It is a home, not an office, not a legislative hall. While many worthy women enter the professional and business world and others aspire to political privilege and preferment, the fact yet remains that the worthiest education for women must have reference to the home and home life. The home is the God-appointed sphere of woman. The divinely appointed decree is that here she shall rule as queen, whether the home be a cottage or a mansion. Indeed, the cultured woman, sympathetic and loving, may shine with such tender grace and compelling charm as to transform even a cottage into a palace, as in the story told by Goethe of the fisherman's hut which by love was raised to the dignity and glory of a gorgeous mansion.

The figure here used to delineate cultured womanly character is altogether apt and appropriate. Reference is not made to the elaborate diamond with its sparkling facets nor to any other costly gem. No mention is made of gorgeous trimmings and rich adornments. The simple, chaste art of the sculptor is made to illustrate the most symmetrical feminine character. If I might say a meaningful word to all the young ladies of our land, I would say, master the simplicities. Recall what that means. There are ten figures on which all mathematical problems are based. There are twenty-six letters by whose combinations all our literature is produced. There are seven prismatic

colors which form the basis of all tints and shades in nature and art. There are the octave tones from which the intricacies and glories of music are evolved. There are just a few chemical elements from which the vast universe is builded. These are the simplicities. To master them is the beginning of all art and science. In a broader sense life's simplicities are the beginning and bases of all that is worthy. Master the simplicities, then learn to combine. These are the two great essentials in education and character. Having done this let the same thought apply to your tastes and fashions and life programs. Only thus will you attain to the truly beautiful. The Greek women of the ancient days of art understood that simplicity was beauty. Outdoor life and perfect health lent each maiden an arm and brow of marble and a cheek of purest rose. With instinctive grace the girl draped herself in one color, white, in a simple robe falling to the ground in one straight line, a line with one flower at the throat, a red rose. Can you imagine anything in the vast universe more charmingly sweet, more exquisitely beautiful? Of all the ideals of personal charm and beauty ever set before the eyes of young womanhood none has ever surpassed this: "Whose adorning let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is imperishable, of the meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price."

In the Tate Art Gallery in London is a painting called "The Girl at the Gate." The scene is laid

in the Highlands of Scotland. The farther background of the picture reveals the rocky cliff and jagged scaur. In the foreground is a rude highland cabin whose tiny yard is surrounded by a rickety picket fence. In front of the little home, the aged father is spading the ground. The mother, bedecked in an apron, stands akimbo feeding her chickens. At the front gate, about which daisies and thistles are blooming and a sparse vine clammers, stands a fair, blue-eyed lassie, dressed in the native cross-barred plaid. Her hand rests on the gate-post. She is merely a peasant girl in form and surroundings, but with an expression of unutterable yearning after some great ideal. Her face is sadly sweet and beautiful. Her fine dreamy eyes—they form the center and point of the picture. What a study! Those fine eyes are looking across the hazy distances. She seems to have visions of a larger, fuller life. Her soul imprisoned and uncultured appears to be striving for liberty, noble activity and lofty service. Those who look upon this picture are attracted to it with awakened sympathy and tenderness. It has well been named "The Girl at the Gate."

This picture reminds us of hundreds and thousands of girls who like this peasant lassie are held back within the barriers of circumstance and narrow environment. What possibilities, what untrained powers, what promise and unfulfilled prophecy are pent up within the lives of these girls who stand at life's gate! There is no nobler task entrusted to

men and women than that of giving "the girl at the gate" a chance in life. A thousand times have I thought of this painting by Clausen as I have looked into the faces of fine, noble girls who lacked the opportunities which would open new vistas of thought and new channels of service. Many a time as I have seen the groups of girls going to and from the schools, or as I have seen them in the colleges, I have rejoiced that so many have found the "gate" opened for them. It is given to the teacher to take the girl at the gate and lead her out into the sweet largeness of a life of service, self-realization and divine fellowship.

VIII

STANDING BEFORE THE OPEN GATES¹

"Open to me the gates of righteousness : I will enter into them, I will give thanks unto Jehovah."—PSALM 118:19.

THIS psalm seems to have been sung antiphonally, partly by the procession while approaching the temple gates, partly by a chorus of priests within the temple and partly by the procession when it had entered. As the worshipping throng approaches the sanctuary the chorus gives place to an individual voice rising in clear notes and saying: "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will enter into them, I will give thanks unto Jehovah." Then comes the answer from within, "This is the gate of Jehovah, the righteous shall enter into it." By a swift and easy step of the imagination we can picture a group of students having finished their course of study, proceeding in choral phalanx, greeted and welcomed by a host of friends. Surely no more fitting words could be chosen as a class chorus, or as a motto for an individual, than the words of the text, "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will enter into them, I will give thanks unto Jehovah."

There are many gates through which the young friends gathered here to-day should not enter, but

¹ Preached to a Graduating Class of Girls.

I point out a few through which if you do enter, your lives, here and hereafter, will be filled with glory and gladness and joy.

THE GATE OF SALVATION

Our Saviour says, "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." He does not mean that we should strive against the gate but against all conditions and influences which would hinder us from entering and being saved. Salvation is the most important thing of all. Without it, education, refinement, wealth and position are without real value. There can be no better time than commencement day for beginning the Christian life. In the response to the text as it is given in the twentieth verse, "This is the gate of Jehovah," it is possible to translate "This is the gate to Jehovah"—that is, by which one comes into His presence. Any who have not received Christ as their Saviour I now point to this salvation gate. Let not this happy day close until you have entered into this gate. In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," the Pilgrim is greatly distressed and knows not whither to go in order to flee from the threatening doom. There came a man to him named Evangelist, to whom the Pilgrim said, "Whither must I fly?" Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, "Do you see yonder wicket gate?" The man said "No." He said, "Do you see yonder shining

light?" He said, "I think I do." Then said Evangelist, "Keep that light in your eye and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate; at which, when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do." So I saw in my dream that the man began to run, crying, "Life! life! eternal life!" His neighbors came out to see him run and as he ran, some mocked, others threatened, and some cried for him to return. Two started to fetch him back by force. Burdened with his load of sin, the Pilgrim kept on until he reached the gate over which was written, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." He knocked many times and there came a kind-hearted one who opened the gate and let him in. When he was stepping in the gate-keeper gave him a friendly pull. I point you to the salvation gate to-day and if you are inclined to enter in I would gladly give the help such as was given to the pilgrim. And more than that, I would take you by the hand as Peter did the lame man who lay helpless at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and lift you up in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may enter in with praise and rejoicing.

THE GATE OF FELLOWSHIP

Real education ought to mean a broadening of sympathy. True culture equips for genuine fellowship, but the best fellowship of all is fellowship with Christ. We used to hear much about the plan of salvation. I do not like the word. Salva-

tion is not a matter of plan, it is fellowship with a person and that person is Jesus. Education that bends the mind and heart away from Jesus is false and ruinous. Like the law of which the apostle writes, education ought to be a "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." I urge upon all young Christians the importance of thinking of their religion as fellowship with a personal Christ. Said one man to another, "Are you on good terms with Jesus?" "No," he replied, "we just salute when we pass, we do not speak." Do not be satisfied unless you are on intimate speaking terms with Jesus. I call your attention to a beautiful passage in the Song of Solomon 1:4: "The king hath brought me into his chambers." Not merely wandering in the gardens with its fruits and flowers, not loitering about the stately pillars of the gateway, but into the palace, into the chambers of luxury, fellowship and love. Let me tell you that in the dwelling of the soul's loving Sovereign, there is a chosen spot, lofty and secret, where we may hold communion with God as with an intimate friend, where the God of peace renders all things peaceful, and the soul, looking up with fixed gaze at his ineffable stillness, is itself awed into tranquillity and repose. This gate of fellowship is indeed the gate of the Lord. It is open to every one of you, and you will miss life's fullest joy and wealth if you fail to cultivate this divine fellowship. I offer one stanza of a poem as a worthy life motto and prayer:

“Not thy gifts I seek, O God,
Not Thy gifts, but Thee,
What were all Thy boundless store
Without Thyself? What less, what more?
Not Thy gifts, but Thee.”

It is possible to every one of you, it is your privilege, it is the very crown of soul culture thus to have Christ as your very own; and let me add this: when you have progressed in this ownership of Christ and fellowship with Him, your friends will soon discover that you are a kind, sympathetic, tender-hearted friend. They may not know the secret of your charm, but you will know that you catch the glory from the face of Him whom your soul adores, and as you live in this fellowship you will learn to appreciate the vast, beautiful world about you. I can think of nothing more grandly beautiful and charmingly sublime than when Francis of Assisi, out of his sense of communion with Christ, in one of his canticles speaks with childlike simplicity of our brother, the sun, who gives us the light; our sister, the moon; our brother, the wind; our sister, water, who is so refreshing, chaste and serviceable to us; our brother, fire, beautiful, bright, courageous and strong; our mother, the earth, who sustains and nourishes us, bringing us fruits and flowers; and finally of our sister, death. His fellowship with Jesus gave him a sense of tender fellowship for the very universe in which he lived. I had a friend who was a florist. His life was sweetened by contact with the flowers which

he cultivated. To go with him through his gardens and hothouses was a rare pleasure. Returning from such visits, I came loaded with the choicest of flowers, but better still my soul was refreshed through the fragrant touch of his chastened aromatic life. Out of his fellowship with the flowers and with the Saviour he brought a winsome and healing comradeship for those whom he met from day to day.

THE GATE OF SERVICE

I am thinking of Jesus, who girded Himself with a towel, poured water into a basin, washed the feet of His disciples and wiped them with the towel wherewith He was girded, and then I hear Him saying, "I am among you as one that serveth." What a rebuke was His action to the clamant ambition of the quarrelling disciples who contended for the high places in the kingdom. Service must be the test of all true education. Your education means much to you, think of what it means to others. This day is significant for you who receive your diplomas. It is not without significance to all who have shown an interest in you from your infancy up to this hour. Your parents and friends and teachers have looked forward fondly to this day. Diplomas are costly. Your teachers have a right to expect that their labors on your behalf shall be multiplied in the service which you render after your departure from the school. Your parents have a right to expect not an adequate com-

pensation to them for what they have bestowed upon you, for this you can never give, but they have a right to expect that throughout the days to come you shall reflect, in the circles in which you move, something of the costly love and labor which they have lavished upon you in order that you might be trained and cultured. And the state has a right to expect honesty, loyalty, patriotism and good citizenship from the thousands of students whom it assists in procuring an education. One other word ought to be said: Large amounts of money have been given, with great sacrifice, and many times it is given by those whose children will never be able to go to college—large amounts of money have been given to build and equip church schools. The churches, therefore, have a right to expect loyalty, devotion and service from those who are the beneficiaries of the educational institutions which have been builded through sacrifice and prayer. Thus the churches should be enriched, as with compound interest, by the lives and service of those for whom the educational institutions are founded and maintained. The homes from which you come should be greatly brightened and blessed by your return. To all the members of the family you ought to impart inspiration, cheer and good fellowship. The loved ones at home have waited for this day, on which you complete your course at school. I charge you not to be a disappointment to those who have banked their love and hope on your achievements.

The gate to the temple of service will not always be grand and imposing in its appearance. It will not always be overgrown with morning-glories and roses; sometimes the gate to the temple of service is low and narrow, sometimes it is rickety and tumbling down. But be not deceived by outward show, be not afraid of uninviting tasks. Do not go limping when duty calls. Remember that you have had advantages which many others have not enjoyed. Go out into the world conscious of a high and holy mission. Waste places are waiting for your coming. The ignorant, the erring, the friendless, the burdened, the perplexed, all of these offer you an opportunity for doing good; and let me remind you that the gate of service opens into the temple of joy. It was the Master who said, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Service increases our capacity for joy.

THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE NOT MADE WITH HANDS

Now I am thinking of the home-going from school. Some of the sweetest memories which many of us cherish are of those days when, done with school, we turn again home with happy, glee-ful hearts. The train wheels did not turn fast enough as we sped on toward home. With what joy we entered the gate, hurried on beneath the shade of the big trees, and through the fragrant flowers to the home portal, to be greeted there by

those who loved us and had been waiting for our coming. Oh, it was a happy time—that getting home again from school.

Finally, when all earth's graduation days have passed, when the classes have met and dispersed for the last time, when the last lesson has been learned, the last earth-problem solved—my prayer is that the gate of heaven will stand wide open to receive every one of you. I make one other reference to the quaint old book, "Pilgrim's Progress." Two pilgrims, Christian and Hopeful, after long and painful wanderings, at last went up through Beulah Land and approached the heavenly city. As they approached the gate a company of shining ones come out to meet them. To the strains of sweetest music, they came up to the gate above which they read in letters of gold, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Passing in at the gate, we are told that they were transfigured and given raiment that shone like gold. With harps and crowns—the harps with which to render praise, and the crowns in token of honor—as the bells of heaven rang, voices were heard saying, "Enter ye into the joy of our Lord." This thrilling picture of the entrance of the pilgrims through the beautiful gate into the delectable city fills us with hope and expectation for the future when we too shall enter in through the gates to dwell in the heavenly home.

IX

LEARNING THE FINE ART OF RIGHT LIVING¹

“And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles.”—LUKE 6:13.

THE night, all of whose hours the divine Master had spent in prayer, had passed; and now it was day. It was graduation day for a class of twelve men who, having been trained and tempered, were accorded a new degree, charged with new responsibility and initiated into a new service. All this was done by the Master who had taught them and now sent them on their mission. He called them; He chose them; He named them. So did these twelve disciples become apostles.

A disciple is a learner; an apostle is a teacher. A disciple follows the science of learning to know; an apostle pursues the art of telling what he knows. These two words, disciple and apostle, cover all the areas of an education, with respect to both its acquirement and its use. The disciple must ever approach his task with the scientific mind seeking to learn the truth; the apostle must go to his work with the passion of an artist seeking to make others

¹ Baccalaureate Sermon preached at Baylor University.

know and receive the truth which he has learned. Looking at the bush burning with fire, yet not consumed, Moses with true scientific instinct said : "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." This attitude of mind led to his discovery of God. He knew how to turn aside from the ordinary, and so he met God who gave him a commission, saying, "I will send thee that thou mayest bring forth my people out of Egypt." Thus the disciple became an apostle. "Come and see," said Jesus to the first two men who would be His disciples. "Come and see," said Philip to Nathaniel. Thus did these men matriculate into discipleship from which later they were graduated into apostleship.

SCHOOL HAS ONLY BEGUN

At the end of our course we turn from the campus and the recitation hall saying, "School is out," when really school has only begun for those who are going to make life count for the largest things. If a school is a place where we may learn, then the whole world is a school and our school days continue through life. One goes to the farm, but if he has spent his school days aright, he goes to read the thoughts of God in the soil and the seasons, in the sowing and the reaping ; the herdsmen and the shepherd learn the ways of God with the cattle that graze the fields and roam the plains ; the navigator watches "the wave, in roarings round the coral reef" and reads the message of the

storm on the world's distant rim ; the chemist deciphers nature's riddles in the atoms ; the astronomer turns the pages of the skies and thinks over God's thoughts with Him ; the geologist notes the handwriting of the ages in the record of the rocks ; the physician traces the divine handiwork in the human frame and serves as nature's assistant in her fight with disease ; the musician listens to the harmonies of the spheres and endeavors to repeat and interpret them ; the prophet ascends the height to behold the glory of God and comes down to tell men what he has seen. Truly does Robert Browning say, "Life is the chance of learning."

But learning is not all. It is not enough to live to learn, we must learn to live. It is not enough to receive impression, the impression must find its expression. Scholarship is not an end, but a means to an end. It is not enough to be scientists, we must be artists as well. Ruskin speaks the truth when he says, "Art is always an incarnation. All art is teaching, all art is praise." Science is learning, art is living. Science is getting ; art is giving. The passivity of discipleship must become the activity of apostleship, if life's measure is to be filled.

Nature is the utterance of God. It is the expression of His will, His thoughts, His purpose. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork." This is the declaration of the ancient Psalmist, but a modern Psalm-writer, with equally rapturous phrase, in his "Hymn Before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni,"

sings thus of the frozen cataracts that hang on Mount Blanc's brow and of the other Alpine wonders :

“ Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the

■■■■

Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living
flowers

Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?
God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,

Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo, God !
God ! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome
voice !

Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like
sounds.

And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God !

“ Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost !

Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest !
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain storm !

Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds !
Ye signs and wonders of the element !

Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise ! ”

CHANCE FOR EVERY WORKER

If nature is the utterance of God, art is the utterance of man. Unhampered in fellowship with God, one man feels the divinity moving about him and within him and his soul finds expression in music, while another utters himself in a painting, still another in a poem, and yet another in a temple. Indeed all really worthful work ought to

be done artistically. If only our hands work, it is handicraft. If the heart works with the hands, the task is art. The supreme problem in the work of the world is that every worker shall have a chance for self-expression in the task which he plies. Whatever suppresses the soul's self-expression is a thraldom and a burden. Men are never free until they are free and happy in their work. That man is a slave who hates the task he has to perform. The bane and blight of our modern civilization is that our industrialism changes so many men and women into machines to the impoverishment and dwarfing of their souls. The old-time trades offered a joy and culture to the apprentice by affording him a chance for self-expression. A most distressing tragedy of our age of tragedies is the process of narrowing to which so many are subjected who compose our gigantic industrial and commercial machinery.

One of the mightiest appeals of an education in this day is the fact that it offers one a chance to preserve one's individuality and conserve the right of initiative. A story is told of a man whose business was that of making andirons. By the hardest work he was able to earn not more than one dollar a day. He complained to a man of broad experience and sympathy that though he worked hard he was not able to support himself and family. This friend asked him if he was putting his heart into his work and suggested that he make one pair of andirons, putting his love into his work, and

make them all that a pair of andirons ought to be. The man did so and produced a real work of art in the form of a pair of andirons which easily brought him one hundred dollars. For the first time in his life of drudgery did the man find it possible to really express himself in his daily employment.

We read with horror of the Chinese binding the feet of their little girls and of the Indians in the northwest bandaging the heads of their little children until they grow into ghastly deformity, but something worse than this cruelty is the binding of the souls of men and women by prejudice, ignorance and falsehood. Real education means the cutting of these crippling, strangling cords so that personality may express itself. This was the calling of Jesus. Until He began to be about thirty years of age He remained in Nazareth, in all probability plying the carpenter's trade. But a day came when He could no longer utter His nature with hammer and saw and plane. He must have utterance in a ministry of love and mercy to men. He must go forth in the strength of His Messiahship to express the divine compassion which filled His soul. And so these twelve men under the compelling charm and impregnating tuition of such a Master could no longer remain as fishermen or follow similar earthly callings. They must find other fields of activity. He chose them because they were ready to be chosen and sent them forth to give expression to the things which they had learned from Him. He had awakened within them

soul-strivings which they had not known before. Now He opens a way through which their ideals may become real.

“Fear not to build thine eyrie in the heights,
Bright with celestial day,
And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul
In simple faith alway ;
And God shall make divinely real
The highest forms of thine ideal.”

LIVING NOBLY THE FINEST ART

The finest art is that of living nobly and worthily. If a man with brush and canvas can produce a picture that will teach and ennable all who look upon it ; if an architect by piling up stones can make a temple that will move all who see it to acknowledge God and His love ; if a sculptor can transform the roughness of a marble block into the beauty of grace and smoothness ; if a poor iron monger can make andirons that will teach some fine truth to those who see them, how much more should they who have come under the tutelage of Jesus so live and so shape their characters that all who know them will be taught and inspired and filled with joy and praise. Alas, there are some architects the lines and curves of whose characters are not so symmetrical as those of their buildings ; there are some musicians whose lives are more lacking in melody than the symphonies which they render ; there are some poets whose spirits are not as sublime as the poems they write. The finest

material on which to work is life. The finest art is the art of right living. Character is the main thing. Its shaping is the worthiest work to which we can give ourselves.

“Take thy life better than thy work. Too oft
Our artists spend their time in rounding soft
Fair curves upon their statues, while the rough
And ragged edges of the unhewn stuff
In their own natures startle and offend
The eye of critic and the heart of friend.

“If in thy too brief day thou must neglect
Thy labor or thy life, let men detect
Flaws in thy work : while their most searching
gaze
Can fall on nothing which they may not praise
In thy well chiselled character. The man
Should not be shadowed by the artisan.”

Apart from what Christ accomplishes in us, man is a pitiful thing, a cousin of the brutes, ignorant as they are and even weaker. But with Christ a man is more than an animal, more than a compound of earthly materials. A chemist recently gave some such analysis of man as the following: Twenty-three pounds of carbon, two pounds of lime, two ounces of phosphorus, one ounce of sodium, iron, potassium, magnesium, silicon, with certain proportions of oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen. But we all know that man is more than such a mixture. Man has a heart within him which may become a whispering gallery where shall be

heard the whispers of God and every cry of human distress. He has a conscience which becomes as sensitive to the voice of duty and the call of right as the needle to the star. Let his intuition be clarified until it shall penetrate all mysteries. Let the higher instincts be caught up into tune and touch with the infinite. Let the soul be redeemed and freed from the bondage of sin through Christ Jesus until man enters into fellowship with the divine and becomes a son of God. In all the world there is no such beauty, no other such expression of truth, no other such expression of divinity as the human soul when touched by the power of redeeming, glorifying grace. As far as we know, man is the one bond between the material and the spirit worlds, one of which slopes down to inert molecules, and the other up to the throne of God. In this fact are his danger and his glory. For him to descend to his lowest possibilities—this is the tragedy of the universe; for him to rise to the highest height of his capabilities—this is the glory of the grace of God. I have sometimes tried to imagine how much poorer our world would be, were there no roses. How much we would have missed the shapeliness, fragrance and beauty! We know something of God because He made the roses. But could God be known as the God of grace except through the gospel of grace? In us God has His opportunity of revealing His grace and compassion. “But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even

when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus ; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

BUILD RELIGION INTO CHARACTER

The Christian is the soul artist. The making of character is the art of arts. How hard it has been to get religion expressed in terms of character ! Religion has been formulated into creeds, it has been written in books, it has been set in ordinances, it has been crystallized into temples, it has been campaigned into wars, it has been harmonized into song, it has been measured into poetry, it has been chiselled into marble ; but Christ, the source and founder of our religion, wants it incarnated into human life, builded into character, melodized into sympathy and metered into loving deeds. We know what the Gospel of Christ is only as we get it in terms of character. Many a medieval artist spent his life in a cell painting the pictures of saints. Is it not better to be a saint than to paint one ? Is it not better to live poetry than to write it ? Is it not better for life to be a harmony, a hallelujah chorus, than it is to write music ? Christ wrote no poetry, painted no pictures, cut no statues, built no temples. He was too busy living His life. The important thing is to live right. Our pro-

fessions, our vocations, our callings are but the scaffolding on which we stand to build our lives. These will be pulled down soon. The life which we build will remain an endless failure or an eternal triumph.

Discipleship is the underpinning of apostleship. Only those were chosen to be apostles who had first been disciples. In becoming apostles they did not cease to be disciples. Of the apostles it is said that He ordained them that they should be with Him as well as to go forth to preach and to heal; and the inference is clear that they would be able to preach and heal and cast out devils only as they fellowshipped with Him. To become an apostle meant the intensifying of discipleship. It is altogether important that the inner fires be kept burning and the divine fellowship maintained. Many a scholar has lost touch with the world and his vital grip on life has been loosened because he ceased to be a student. The apostleship failed because its foundation in discipleship gave way. The inner life must be renewed day by day and this can be done only through uninterrupted intercourse with Him who is the source of life. Paul hints at a tragedy which is all too common in the experiences of men when he says: "Lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway." That masterpiece of the painter Giotto, "The Corruption of Judas," is full of suggestive symbolism as in the case of the halo about the head of Judas, which has half disappeared and is vanish-

ing away just as he closes the bargain to sell his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. In that moment of the vanishing halo he lost his claim to sainthood and forfeited his right to apostleship. He has yielded to the seductions of what seemed to himself advantage and worldly gain. And in so doing he became a traitor not only to his Lord, but to the higher interests of his own soul. There must be a perpetual self-renewal if we are to remain among the living. The soul must ever be recreating itself, freshly vibrating in all its fibers, raising up new interests for itself. And this can be done only as we stay close to Jesus and do our tasks in His conscious presence.

KEEPING UP DEFENSES WITHIN

The inner life must not be neglected; the altar fires in the temple must be kept burning; no treason should be allowed to lurk for a moment in the throne room of the soul. Remember that there is no obligation that can take precedence over keeping up the internal defenses of character. A story is told of a Dutch city besieged by an army of Spaniards who sought to demolish its walls with their mighty battering rams. But while the Spaniards pounded away on the outside walls the inhabitants of the city were busy erecting stronger walls on the inside; so that, when the outer walls finally crumbled, the city was still secure with the walls that had been built within. So must we keep building if we would withstand the shock of assaults

from without. "Strengthened with might in the inner man—that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," was the burden of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians. Here is life's enrichment, life's enlargement, life's equipment. With Christ dwelling in your hearts and strengthening the inner man, you will never have to surrender to the enemy attacking from without, "because greater is he that is within you than he that is in the world." Of Solomon's elegant palace which he built for himself in Jerusalem it was said that he overlaid the house with gold within. "Overlaid with gold within." The essential thing is that the interior shall be fine and beautiful regardless of what the exterior may appear to be. The hidden interior must be strong and beautiful, otherwise the outside will be false and weak. A single driving wheel on the locomotive of a certain express train carries a load of thirteen tons. With a train making sixty miles an hour, any given part of the rail receives this thirteen-ton blow from the driving wheel in the thousandth part of a second. Under this constant hammering, rapid and tremendous, this pounding of steel against steel, this shock of atom against atom, the rail bears the fearful test and resists the strain, and the cargo of life and merchandise is carried on in safety. But if the rail is faulty, there will be wreck and loss.

The educational mission is to build character that can withstand the shock of modern life and its countless temptations to wreck and destroy. A

cross section photograph reproduced in a technical magazine shows the flaw in a defective steel rail, which, though having withstood a tremendous amount of pressure, at last gave way with disastrous results because of the defect. If it is important to make steel rails without flaws, how much more important is the making of character that shall be flawless at the center.

“For life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And batter’d with the shocks of doom
To shape and use.”

What a tribute to the character of Washington is the recent Government survey of the old Fairfax land grants! The sixteen-year-old boy worked under conditions so primitive that mistakes would have been excusable, and in a wilderness so remote that in any case they would hardly have been detected for generations; yet the recent survey of the land, made with the finest modern instruments, has failed to disclose any appreciable error in his work. They say the cherry tree anecdote is a myth. Let it go, we do not need it. Washington’s whole life shows that he ran his lines by the compass of character. So with the graduate, diploma in hand. You turn from the school of discipleship to the world of apostleship which is waiting for the man who can run a straight line through the trackless

wilderness, who will link his surveys with the fixed star of justice ; who, when there are no visible landmarks and all the common lights have gone out, will feel and answer the unerring pull of deity upon his sensitive conscience as the needle turns to its magnetic pole ; who is willing to wait for all the coming years to vindicate the justice of his positions and conclusions, and appeals to the judgment of the great White Throne in whose light he will at last surrender his apostleship untarnished and unbetrayed.

X

HOME CONSERVATION

“When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.”—DEUT. 22:8.

“Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.”—2 KINGS 4:26.

THIS first Scripture reveals God's thought of the home, its safety, its care and proper environment. The second introduces us into the ideal home showing us its love, its tender relations and its triumphs. It was a home into which death had entered. The father was bereft of his only son and heir. The mother's arms were empty, her heart was torn with anguish—her son was dead! With unshaken faith in the eternal goodness of God, to the threefold question, “Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?” she answered triumphantly, “It is well.” Thus emphasis is set upon religion as the central principle of the home, the sure foundation upon which it must be builded.

The family, the oldest institution known to man, is in most respects the most important. It is through the family that man begins to be; it is in the family that he learns the meaning of comradeship;

it is in the family that his will is disciplined and his life is determined ; and it is in the family that he is fitted for life in the wider social fellowship. The family is the link that binds the generations together. In no other place is man influenced so potently for weal or woe. It is the foundation of morality, the chief educational institution and the fostering place for religion. The home is the heart's fatherland, where the race is nurtured and its future decided. It is the ideal sphere of human life. It is the prototype of heaven, as is seen when Christ speaks of heaven as "my Father's house." The home is the bulwark of virtue, the stronghold of morals, the basis of patriotism. Whatever strikes at the home strikes at the heart of the race. Whatever builds up the home is universally constructive.

Back of the home is the family and back of the family is the divine institution of marriage.

" Until we find as darkness rolls
Away, and evil mists dissolve,
That nuptial contrasts are the poles
On which the heavenly spheres revolve."

The attraction between men and women is just as fundamental a fact in social life as the attraction of the earth is in the physical world. The only way in which this tremendous force of mutual attraction can be prevented from wrecking the race is to make it contribute in building lives by building homes of contentment. In this connection it is

a significant fact that the slums are largely aggregations of single men and women. In the "Idyls of the King," in administering to the Knights of the Round Table that part of the oath in which they are pledged to love one maiden only, King Arthur says,

"For indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

Swedenborg's teaching on marriage deserves to be heeded by all young men and women contemplating matrimony. "It is provided by the Lord that marriage pairs are born, and that they, the boys and the girls, are continually educated, unconsciously, for marriage, and that after the completed time the then marriageable virgin and the then marriageable youth meet and see each other somewhere, as if by chance, and instantly, as by some instinct, they know that they are mates, and from a kind of internal dictate they think within them, the young man, 'She is mine,' and the maiden, 'He is mine.' And when this has been for some time fixed in the minds of both they deliberately address each other and are betrothed. It is said, as if by chance, and as if by instinct, because, when unknown, it so appears, but the meaning is 'by Divine Providence.' "

A wholesome and ennobling belief for every clean-minded boy is, that somewhere in the world the girl, whom he shall some day claim as his very own, is growing up pure as the lilies and fair as the stars, and that, in the midst of her temptations, problems and struggles, she is keeping her body and her spirit sweet and pure so that on some fair day she may place on the sacred altar of their mutual love an unblemished and holy sacrifice. With this challenging, chastening thought in mind ought he not to undergo the discipline of mind and body that will qualify him to meet her at that altar with an offering not more nor less than he expects from her? And in turn the girl should feel that somewhere among the countless boys there is one whom she will some day call her own and that it is her duty to keep herself for him as he is keeping and fitting himself for her. The only secure foundation of wedlock is self-discipline and self-sacrifice. To build the weight of the family upon any other is to invite failure and disaster. Too great stress cannot be put upon the fact that the ideal home must be builded in an atmosphere of love, and nothing in this world is of greater importance to the young man and the young woman than that they keep their hearts and lives true and loyal for their prospective wedding day.

“ Who is the happy husband? He
Who, scanning his unwedded life,
Thanks Heaven, with a conscience free,
'Twas faithful to his future wife.”

After the wedding day comes the task of real home building. One family to one house is the only normal condition. When twenty families live in one tenement it is as if twenty souls were inhabiting one body. That was somewhat the condition of the demoniac of Gadara, in whom dwelt a legion. And he was crazy.

“ Home’s not merely four square walls,
Though with pictures hung and gilded ;
Home is where affection calls —
Where its shrine the heart has builded.”

The possible derivation of the word husband is *hus-binda*, which means the house band, that is, the band around the house, that which holds the house or family together, shielding, protecting and unifying. The word wife is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *wif* or *wil*, which means to tremble or hover, as a mother bird hovering over her nest ; or it may come from *wefan*, to weave. Indeed in the ancient home the wife was the weaver, and as she wove the fabric for clothing the family, she wove in not only the threads but her love and sympathy and care. The true wife to-day is indeed a weaver. Out from eternity the woof of the child-life is unwound before her, into which it is her mission to weave from the shuttle of her own life the threads of love, purpose, high aim and character. It is also for her to weave the beautiful fabric of the home, even as the mother bird weaves the material which she gathers into the home nest. To be able to

weave the home after the heavenly pattern is the highest art and finest accomplishment.

The teaching of the New Testament with regard to the home cannot be improved upon. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands ; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives ; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." Here it seems possible that the un-Christian husband may be won to salvation by the Christian influence and conversation of the wife when all other avenues of religious approach have been barred. Love is, and ought to be, eminently religious : it may even lead up to and result in religion. "For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife ?" The fulfillment of this Scripture is often demonstrated particularly in the case of husbands brought by their wives to an acceptance of Christ. Recently on the same day four noble men made public announcement of their faith and became members of the church where this pastor ministers, and their conversion was the result of the patient, prayerful efforts of their consecrated wives. And such happy outcome is not to be wondered at, for, as Amiel, in a striking passage in his Journal, says : "When all around a man is wavering and changing,—when everything is growing dark

and featureless to him in the far distance of an unknown future,—when the world seems but a fiction or a fairy tale, and the universe a chimera,—when the whole edifice of ideas vanishes in smoke, and all realities are penetrated with doubt,—what is the fixed point which may still be his? The faithful heart of a woman! There he may rest his head; there he will find strength to live, strength to believe, and, if need be, strength to die in peace with a benediction on his lips. Who knows if love and its beatitude, clear manifestation as it is of the universal harmony of things, is not the best demonstration of a fatherly and understanding God, just as it is the shortest road by which to reach Him? Love is a faith, and one faith leads to another." Indeed a man who truly loves his wife, who is a true believer in Christ, is thereby tremendously advantaged as he turns to believe in Christ and to live the Christian life. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." "Dwell with them according to knowledge!" How many husbands fail at this point, and because of this failure disaster and suffering come to the home! "That your prayers be not hindered!" By this we understand that the religious life of the husband and wife counts for but little unless their home life is right. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he

might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." Some one objects that the wife should submit herself unto her husband, but this is not an unreasonable or hard requirement when the husband is not bitter against his wife and when he loves her as Christ loved the Church and in the same way gives himself for her. Christ loves the ideal Church, not merely the Church as it is but the Church as He is going to make it, glorious, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." So ought the husband and wife to love each other, looking out the lovable qualities and magnifying them, at the same time overlooking those qualities that are unlovable. By doing this the married couple, as they grow in years, will grow in mutual understanding and sympathy and love.

" On wings of love uplifted free,
And by her gentleness made great
I'll teach how noble man should be
To match with such a lovely mate."

How pitiful it is, and how tragic, for the husband and wife to grow cold and indifferent toward each other, for them to lose all sense of romance and affection, for the husband to be blunt, dull and uninteresting while the wife loses wilfully her charm

and attraction! How sad for two lives thus to drag on in this careless way, cramped and suffering, or at last to drift apart in hostility!

The home is the testing place of religion, where the teachings of the Bible are put into practice. If our religion is worth the name it must be lived in the home. There is opportunity in the home to practice every teaching of Christ. When one of Verdi's great compositions was rendered for the first time in Florence, it was received with tremendous applause by the huge assembly which came to hear it. But the composer was not satisfied with this torrent of popular enthusiasm but kept his face fixed on Rossini who sat in the audience, because without that master's approval the tumult of the throng brought no happiness to his soul. So the presence of Christ in the home ought to be the touchstone of conduct. If we have the mind of Christ, home becomes a joy and triumph. When our homes shall be dominated by His presence, there will be happiness and peace and joy.

“ ‘Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue—
‘Tis the natural way of living.”

The Bible ought to be read and prayer made often in every home. Is your home a place of prayer? Is it Christian or Christless? I plead with the fathers and mothers now that they maintain the altar of prayer in the home. “More things are wrought by prayer than this world

dreams of." It is the privilege of all fathers and mothers to bind by prayer their homes to the throne of God. Have your children ever heard you pray? Have you told them about Jesus? Have you taken Christ into the home? You need Him there. You need His presence when all is fair and prosperous. You need Him when the little baby, fresh and gentle and helpless, makes its arrival. What a blessed hour is that which brings down something of heaven into the midst of our rough earthliness. Blessed be babyhood with its effusion of innocence and freshness and life-giving sweetness! What little of Paradise we see still on earth is due largely to its presence among us. Without fatherhood and motherhood how poor would this earth be!

"Great reverence is our debt to children," is the pregnant saying of a famous moralist. Grasp the vital significance of the words. They are always true, but true now with a truth that ought to grip our minds, for never before in the whole history of the world has it been more evident that the child is the hope of the nation. In these sad and awful days nothing can condone the suicidal crime, if we shall neglect the children, their moral protection and religious training.

And surely we need the holy influences of Jesus in the home when the little children are toddling around learning to walk and learning to talk, and later when we start them out to school, and all the time when they are growing up, and when they

are entering manhood and womanhood. And Christ ought to be there when the young people begin to fall in love and choose their life partners. As of old, Christ ought to be at the wedding feast. And then when sickness comes, when the little one is burned with fever, tossing restless through the long, weary nights of watching, it is so desolate if Christ is not with us in those hours! And in those experiences that center around a little white casket covered over with flowers, the darkness is impenetrable if not relieved by the light from Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." And there are other days when, if we do not have Christ with us, the soul is stunned under its intolerable grief, as it calls out into the unresponsive depths of an inexplicable and unrelenting sorrow. A novelist of the day tells a pathetic story which truly parallels the experiences of many homes. He tells of a poor girl, who died in a little white-washed, ruined cottage, where help was impossible, where life was blank, blind, and dull as the brown clay in the sodden November fields. But the Light of the World had shone into the dreary room. The care of father, mother, and sister was perfect in its tenderness and self-forgetfulness, but a mightier love warmed the air. The sufferer lay on a stump bedstead, and to protect her from the draughts, an old piece of carpet had been nailed on a kind of rough frame, and placed between her and the door. When she saw her friend a smile came over her face like the sunshine,

and she asked that the last three chapters of Matthew be read. She heard the story of the conflict, and when she came to the resurrection, she felt that this was the truth of death. So it was. She died, and lay with her pale face unutterably peaceful and serious, bound up with a white neckerchief. Her body was laid in the grave of the Meeting House among her kindred, and a little mound was raised over her. Her father tended it while he lived, but he died, and her mother had to go out to earn a living, and her grave became like all the others—scarcely distinguishable in the tall rank herbage. But she did not die. The soul of the poor girl had passed away—only a girl, and yet there was something in that soul greater and higher than the sun whose rays poured through the window. What had become of her? Let Jesus answer: “In my Father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

This earnest word to the husband and father who is not a Christian. You owe it to your children to enthrone Christ in your home life. You may be providing them with all needed physical comforts and educational advantages, but you are startlingly negligent if you leave their spiritual natures uncared for. There are many wives, who, through difficulties indescribable, are endeavoring to live for Christ and rear their children for His

service without the coöperation of their husbands. Such husbands ought to join their wives in this highest and holiest task of winning the sons and daughters for Christ and His service. How small this world will seem to us when we come to die, when the great white throne comes into view and eternity with its unmeasured vastness spreads out before us, when time with us shall be no more and our earthly homes are broken up forever! Will our boys and girls be safe? Are we going to meet them in the heavenly world or are we going to let them slip away from us unprepared, both for this life and for that which is to come? There are hundreds of un-Christian fathers who ought to come, bringing their sons and daughters with them, into the kingdom of God. Here are some very simple little lines which I will repeat—not very elegant poetry, but they are heart searching.

“A careful man I ought to be,
A little fellow follows me.
I do not care to go astray
For fear he'll go the self-same way.

“I cannot once escape his eyes,
Whate'er he sees me do he tries.
Like me he says he's going to be—
That little chap who follows me.

“He thinks that I am good and fine,
Believes in every word of mine;
The base in me he must not see,
That little chap who follows me.

“I must remember as I go
Through summer sun and winter snow,
I’m building for the years to be
The little chap who follows me.”

The children have a duty in the home as well as the parents. “Honor thy father and thy mother” is the divine command. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord,” is the gospel message. Children owe it to their parents to treat them with courtesy and respect. They cannot know the love and anxiety, the tender care, the unfailing sympathy, which their parents entertain for them. Possibly there is no pain, of which the human heart is capable, comparable to the anguish which the parent heart suffers from the ingratitude and disobedience of a thoughtless child. Upon his return home from college a mother found in her son’s coat pocket three of the letters which she had written to him still unopened. Poor woman! It almost broke her heart. Said she, “My boy had the first claims on me, and I put aside everything that I might write to him regularly.” In contrast to such neglect I met some days ago a young man who had been living away from home six years. Speaking with gentle enthusiasm of his mother he let slip the remark that during the six years he had been absent from home not a single day had passed without his writing to his mother. Another young man has the record of having written his mother every day for thirteen years. By such thoughtful attentions these sons help keep the homes built up and also

help keep their mothers young. Last Sunday evening, just before preaching, I called over the names of the states in our Union beginning with Maine and ending with Oregon and requested the men in military uniform from each state to respond by standing. Forty-five states were represented. On a previous similar occasion the soldiers from thirty-one states were present, while Alaska, Hawaii and five foreign countries were represented. Were not our hearts stirred as we thought of the homes from which come these young men in answer to the call of our country? And when a score of these young men in answer to the pastor's invitation spoke briefly on the value of religion in the army and all joined in singing "Tell Mother I'll Be There," did not our thoughts go back to the thousands of mothers and fathers whose prayers and love are following these soldier boys to the camps and to the battle front? Surely the strength of our homes is being tested and it is the time for faith and prayer and fresh consecration.

For me at least, the present hour is making revelations deeper than anything I have yet experienced. As by a vision, not unlike those given to the prophets of old, but certainly more realistic, I am being permitted to get an inside view of American home-life such as one is rarely privileged to have. It is through the unceasing and increasing stream of letters coming to me from the fathers, but oftener from the mothers, asking that we give such attention and encouragement as we can to

their sons now in training at the army posts and cantonments in this vicinity. These letters reveal the soul of the motherhood of our land, the faith, the love, the prayer of the mothers of the American army; and another revelation is made—it is that the strength and glory of our Americanism are to be found in the religious homes and fostered by our Christian mothers. For the triumph of all that is best in our civilization one thing remains to be done—our army, with all the rest of us helping, must make potent and operative the ideals which the Christian motherhood of our nation has stood for and sought to inculcate. The test of our courage shall be in our sons living and acting worthy of their mothers.

“The bravest battle that ever was fought !
Shall I tell you where and when ?
On the maps of the world you will find it not —
'Tis fought by the mothers of men.

“Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen !
Nay, not with eloquent words or thought
From mouths of wonderful men,

“But deep in the walled-up woman's heart —
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently, bore her part —
Lo, there is that battle-field !”

XI

CHRIST AND WOMAN'S GLORY

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her."

—1 COR. 11:15.

"Then Mary anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair."—JOHN 12:3.

IF a woman's hair is the crown of her beauty and thus the ensign of her character, what more exquisite thing could Mary have done than kneeling in the presence of Jesus to wipe His feet with her hair? She laid her glory at the feet of her Lord, nor was such homage disdained by Him. He accepted the worship, immortalized the worshipper, and interpreted the deed in terms which, through the centuries, have called forth the wonder and admiration of all devout souls. In interpretation of the deed and in memory of her who performed it, the Master said: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." He speaks of "this gospel"—the gospel then and there set forth in figure in this act of anointing, the gospel illustrated in the broken flask, the flowing ointment, and the spreading fragrance. This was not the first time Mary had been at Jesus' feet. Already she had sat at His feet as a learner, and

kneeled at His feet as a mourner. Now she comes as a devout worshipper, bringing a costly gift and rendering a beautiful service.

In this act of Mary's, in which she wipes the feet of Jesus with her hair, we behold woman bringing her best to Christ, coming as by natural gravitation, and yielding to the transfiguring influences of Christianity the finest traits of her femininity. Mary laid her glory at Jesus' feet, and in doing so her glory was glorified. The religion of Christ thus touches the soul of woman and adds to her glory a new and greater glory.

Let us inquire what are some of the outstanding qualities of feminine character, which may be thought of as the glory of womanhood, and which, if consecrated to Christ and His Gospel, are touched into a new significance and made to glow with new beauty.

I. One glory of woman is her Power of Personal Charm and physical beauty. This is a subject of universal interest both to men and women. It has been accorded a prominent place in poetry and song, painting, statuary and music; and it has been a potent factor in social and political life, in some ages even bringing on great wars. Painters have represented Mary as a woman of rare beauty and we can easily endorse the conception. Her hair must have been the crown of her beauty, and this she lays under the tribute of service as she adores her Lord.

Feminine beauty is not to be despised. It is not

ignored in the New Testament, as may be shown by a brief study of Acts 9:36: "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas." The pains bestowed on her name by the historian suggests that Dorcas was a beautiful woman. In Aramaic her name was Tabitha, which, by interpretation, is called Dorcas. On the margin of our English Bible the translation gives the synonym "Gazelle." Tabitha, Dorcas, Gazelle—they are the Aramaic, Greek, English equivalents. To-day we often give our young maidens the names of flowers, as the lily, the violet, the rose; or the names of precious stones, as the pearl, the ruby, the opal. In like manner the ancients often borrowed from the animal world. So a beautiful woman would be compared to a gazelle, a creature noted for modesty of disposition, softness of outline, grace of movement and liquidity of eye. It was a pretty name fraught with the tenderness of poetry. It must have been expressive of the rare beauty of the maid who bore it, since the pains taken to explain it seem sufficient proof that the name was indicative of rare personal charm. Tabitha was comparable to the gazelle—the most exquisite figure that poetry could summon to set forth physical attractions. Here, then, it appears that we have feminine beauty allied with Christianity; but it is recommended to us not because it is beautiful, but because it is good. The classic theory of life exalts beauty above everything else. It even loves good only for its beauty; but

the gospel theory makes goodness supreme, with beauty itself paying homage to goodness.

Two words for beauty occur in the New Testament. One means outward physical beauty, purely of the sensuous kind, and occurs three times. Only once is it used in the Gospels, where it refers to the "whited sepulchers which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones." The other word is used one hundred and three times. When applied to things, it means precious, well adapted. Joined to the names of persons, it signifies not only beauty but purity of heart, praiseworthiness, nobility. It refers not so much to the external form, as to the internal motive or purpose. It is one of the richest, most refined words in the classic language—a fit vessel into which to put the fine content of the gospel idea of beauty, goodness and worth. Beauty is beautiful only so far as it blossoms into flowers of holiness. Beauty of form and color is only what Dorcas possessed in common with the lithe gazelle of the forest. On the basis of physical beauty, humanity is no better than the hind of the mountains, or the flower of the garden. Real beauty must rise to the sphere of morals and ally itself with goodness. For a man or woman to be a mere beautiful animal is immoral. Unless allied with higher qualities a beautiful face has no more merit than a beautiful landscape, and a handsome figure in flesh and blood has no more value than the handsome figure of Venus de Milo. A beautiful

woman is not so good as a beautiful gazelle of the mountain unless her beauty is dignified by character. Cheap beauty is like the glitter of cheap jewelry. The diamond is valuable because its beauty is inherent and permanent. Imagine what a great moral achievement would be won in the world if all feminine beauty and womanly charm were sanctified by the spirit of the Gospel. To what a new plane would life be lifted, and to what fresh splendor would society be touched!

II. Another glory of woman is her Power of Emotion. Through this channel, if it be unobstructed, the religion of Christ carries to a woman's heart a new music for its throbings, and offers a new goal for its aspirations. Woman loves more deeply than man, and without love or the return of love, there is little that can satisfy her nature. One great woman, an acknowledged leader of her sex, showed the feminine desire for an object of devotion far more than she realized when she said: "Looking back over my life, I see that its key-note, through all the blunders and blind mistakes and follies, has been the longing for sacrifice to something felt as greater than self." Here is a vast field of possible suffering and despair. Who can estimate the anguish and grief and pain resulting from misdirected feminine emotion. Here too is the realm of untold possible triumphs. Of one woman who kneeled in His presence and wiped His feet with her hair, Jesus said: "She hath loved much." Her life was broken, her soul was in

despair, her emotions had been trampled upon as morning-glory vines by the wayside, but at last her love had found its worthy object, her spirit arose, she responded to the call of infinite kindness and passed up from defeat to victory. The religion of Jesus, as mercy to the sunken, suffering race, as the blossom of divine affection on the stalk of God's patience, as the reign of gentleness and love, comes to woman's tired soul like a repose from heaven. With great feeling Adelaide Proctor tells of her efforts to rediscover the lost chord, which one day came from the organ into her soul like a great amen, flooding the twilight, quieting the pain and sorrow and linking all the perplexing meanings into one perfect peace.

“ I have sought, but I seek it vainly,
That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the organ,
And entered into mine.”

There are tens of thousands of women who are tremulously feeling up and down life's keyboard for the lost chord of peace, hope, unity, and victory. The real lost chord may be found by a woman's heart in that great heart which loved unto death on the cross. Finding the heart's key-note there, life becomes a triumphant symphony, rising above the world's disharmony and strife, while humanity itself becomes an immense keyboard of responsive notes upon which to play the melodies of sympathy, compassion and kindness. Thus catching the chord

of attunement of the emotions, the soul is harmonized for all experiences.

“ I set my wind-harp in the wind,
And the wind came out of the south ;
Soft, soft it blew, with gentle coo,
Like words from a maiden’s mouth,
And like the stir of angel’s wings
It gently touched the trembling strings,
And then my harp gave back to me
A wondrous, heavenly melody.

“ I set my wind-harp in the wind,
And the wind from the north blew loud ;
From the icy north, it hurried forth,
And dark grew sea and cloud,
It whistled down the mountain’s height,
And smote the quivering chords with might,
But still my harp gave back to me,
Its wondrous, heavenly melody.”

III. Still another glory of woman is her Power of Intuition. To the reasoning disciples, who would set a money value on the lavish gift of ointment, figuring it out as worth so many shillings in current coin, Mary’s deed seemed but rash folly. But skipping over all such monetary calculations, Mary, following her womanly instincts, did what she wanted to do. She obeyed the bidding of her heart, content to wait for justification until Jesus Himself interpreted her impulse, saying: “ Let her alone, against the day of my burying hath she kept this.” There was something in the presence of Jesus which called out this unfettered conduct on

the part of Mary. So does Christ always give a chance to eager, earnest souls. The unaffected simplicity of the schoolgirl, who, if you admire her flowers, naively shares them with you, insisting that you have the largest lily and the fairest rose, if unspoiled in its development, in such an atmosphere as that in which Mary here moved, matures into a womanly charm, which by Coventry Patmore is thus described in "The Rose of the World":

"In mind and manners how discreet;
How artless in her very art;
How candid in discourse; how sweet
The concord of her lips and heart;
How simple and how circumspect;
How subtle and how fancy-free;
Though sacred to her love, how decked
With unexclusive courtesy."

This intuition of woman never found itself more grandly expressed than when Mary "took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment." We call this quality intuition, but is it not pure intellect? Did not Mary sense the true value of ointment more accurately than her mathematical and reasoning critics? The Gospel is for the unshackling of intellect. Certainly it brings a message of emancipation to the feminine mind. It calls out and directs woman's power of thought wherever its appeal is answered. To appreciate the meaning of Christianity in woman's unshack-

ling we need only contrast with this anointing scene the status assigned to woman in the so-called classic ages. In the white light shed on the world from this scene, how stained appear the representatives of womanhood as portrayed by Homer in Helen, the lovely daughter of Zeus and Leda, with her shameless sin; or by Vergil in the freakish Dido; or in the lovely Aphrodite, or the sensual Venus. In this holy atmosphere "filled with the odor of the ointment," with which Mary anoints the feet of Jesus, we hesitate to quote the utterances of some of the great men of the classic age with respect to womanhood.

From Themistocles we shall hear nothing, for he was too impure to estimate woman's place in human life, nor from Pericles, for he was too untrue to the law of virtue. Listen to Demosthenes: "We have mistresses for our pleasure and wives to bear us children and to care for our households." Said Socrates: "Is there a human being with whom you talk less than with your wife?" Aristotle bent his genius to prove the glory of slavery and to show that women were of an "inferior kind." For Praxiteles, the famous sculptor, the most distinguished evil woman of the time stood as a model. It is true that in those ages there appeared here and there a few noble and notable women like flowers blooming among noxious weeds; but just as the morning-glory vine climbs over the trellis to bloom aloft, so womanhood has received its mightiest uplift from the Gospel.

Going back to Acts 9:36, we read once more, "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha." Tabitha was a disciple. She was a female disciple. The word disciple here occurs in the feminine form. This form is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, nor was it found at all in classic Greek. The masculine form is used frequently, but the feminine never. Why is the word not used in ancient Greek? The word was not used because the thing was not known. Men disciples were known to heathen religions and philosophies, but women disciples were rare. Women were looked down upon, they were denied education; they were the toys, the instruments, the slaves of men, but not their partners, helpmates and friends. One ancient writer gives as the ground for this deep contempt for woman her "levity of mind"; and Cicero in like manner explains it as due to her "infirmity of purpose." Still the opportunity was denied her to improve her mind or strengthen her purpose. Here a new word is coined. Dorcas was a disciple. The word means a female disciple. A new word is coined because a new idea is born, a new day has dawned—the day of woman's emancipation. Christianity elevates woman to the rank of discipleship. Neither Plato nor Aristotle ever had women among their pupils; even Judaism did not assign her a place beside man as his equal in dignity and rank. In its beautiful temple Judaism had a court called the "Court of the Women," into which women were turned like sheep

into their pen. The genius of Judaism was separation, not communion ; but Christianity raises woman to an equality with man, making this difference that she be protected in the struggle of life. Here is the crown and glory of female education.

“ A woman, like the Koh-i-noor,
Mounts to the price that's put on her.”

IV. Her power of Conscious Self-renunciation adds to the glory of womanhood. It was not an easy thing for this refined, cultured, pedigreed woman to break through the barriers of polite propriety, crush the costly flask, pour its contents upon the honored guest's head, and falling at His feet, wipe them with her hair ; but woman is ready for self-renunciation and self-denial if the motive be strong enough, and Mary had a worthy motive. The laying of this power at the feet of Jesus has become one of the conquering assets for righteousness in the world. In the presence of Jesus, woman does not recoil from long-suffering ; she begins with the child in her arms and continues to pour out her life for those whom she loves.

“ If I were hanged on the highest hill,
Mother o' mine, oh, mother o' mine,
I know whose love would follow me still,
Mother o' mine, oh, mother o' mine.

“ If I were drowned in the deepest sea,
Mother o' mine, oh, mother o' mine,
I know whose tears would come down to me,
Mother o' mine, oh, mother o' mine.

“ If I were damned of body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
Mother o’ mine, oh, mother o’ mine.”

The self-giving Christ makes appeal to the self-giving heart of woman. The mother whose heart yearns over her wandering first-born can easily understand the longings of Divine Love over the wayward human race. Woman’s self-renouncing soul holds within its grasp the key for interpreting the mysteries of Calvary. The scars in her own life of self-sacrifice are often the alphabet by which she is able to spell out the message of the crucifixion.

“ She loves with love that cannot tire ;
And when, ah woe, she loves alone,
Through passionate duty love springs higher,
As grass grows taller round a stone.”

Touched and transfigured by the spirit of the Gospel, woman’s power of self-renunciation has become a mighty and constructive force, so that now Christian women are the builders, the binders and the beautifiers of society. In illustration of this is the testimony of Barrie, the Scotch novelist, to his mother, the heroine of his tales : “ Her eyes have guided me through life, and I pray that they may be my earthly judge to the last.” And this he wrote after he had returned from helping put her tired body to earth.

V. Her power of Unfailing Fidelity and Dauntless Loyalty is another glory of womanhood which

has been touched into radiance and mightily utilized by Christianity. Who can measure the redeeming and sanctifying effects of the story of Mary's devotion as it has been told throughout the centuries and around the world by the messengers of the cross: "She hath done what she could ; she hath anointed my body beforehand for the burying." What comfort was thus ministered to the Saviour by this gentle deed ! He had sought in vain for sympathy from His disciples as He walked with sorrowing heart along the way. But here is one whose foresight and faithfulness bring the comfort which He so deeply craves. When Jesus was dead, Joseph wrapped His body in a fine linen cloth and laid it in a new tomb. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight, while the women went away to prepare spices and ointments for His dead body. All this was gentle and beautiful service ; but Mary outdid these loving ministries in that she came "aforehand" with her flask of ointment. She gave her gift in time for the Master to receive it. She poured out her ointment in time for Him to enjoy it. The fragrance of it must have lingered about His head while the soldiers crowned Him with thorns, about His garments as the soldiers parted them among themselves, and on His feet when they were pierced with nails. Even the tomb must have been sweetened by this precious anointing. The thoughtful foresight of this woman was equalled only by her unfailing loyalty.

And here we are reminded of another Mary. It is Mary, the mother of Jesus, whose changeless fidelity is reported in the words, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother." It is put down as a part of the account of Christ's death. It is a fine and touching record—motherhood standing by the cross!

Long years before, when Mary presented her first-born in the temple, she was met by the prophet's startling words, "a sword shall pierce through thine own soul"; but the uniqueness of her experience was not in the vision of suffering which was held out to her. All mothers have that vision. Mary indeed brought into the world, and nurtured, a life which would yield her the joys of a measureless love, but which would also bring her in sorrow to the foot of the cross. In this regard her experience was one with the universal experience of motherhood, for all motherhood has the sign of the cross set upon it from its very beginning. The unique glory of Mary's sorrow first appears in her meaningful and unmurmuring response to the angel's promise of virgin motherhood, "Behold the hand-maid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." She made the will of God supreme, consecrating to it the priceless gift of her virginity. In a very genuine sense every mother may take her place with Mary at the foot of the cross, if in true sacrificial spirit she is willing that her motherhood shall become a factor in the world's redemption.

In Titian's great painting, "The Assumption of

the Virgin," Mary is seen rising heavenward to meet the archangel who descends to crown her, while the Apostles stand gazing as if yearning to follow her into the glory. That part of the picture might have a lesson for all of us. It touches us in tender places. Many of the noblest men have yearned to enter into the fuller, deeper, nobler things of Christ as they have witnessed the fidelity and progress of some woman saint, sometimes a wife, a mother, a sister, or even a little daughter. To this woman standing by the cross, His own mother, the divine Saviour cried as He looked down upon John, His beloved disciple, "Woman, behold thy son." To this day the world needs mothering by those who have stood by the cross. Some of us would be poor and desolate indeed if we had not known such mother-love. This is the call to the highest. No greater thing can be done than this standing by the cross. No holier place where our glory may be laid than at Jesus' feet. Once more, it was a woman—one who had been at Jesus' feet, who, early in the morning, hastened to the sepulcher to find her Lord after He had risen from the dead. Even yet Christ is risen first to a Mary Magdalene. Our race waits for woman's heart to keep announcing the resurrection message. Christ still counts on women to tell the world, in its weeping and waiting, of His life, and grace, and power; and Christ's confidence in woman's fidelity to His cause is Christ's call to woman to a still greater fidelity.

XII

RESISTING THE DOWNWARD PULL

“For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ? ”—1 JOHN 5 : 4, 5.

THE downward pull ! Do you know what it is ? Have you felt it ? It is tremendous. It acts on all. It lays hold on us stealthily and constantly. It comes upon us through environment and through nature itself. To live uprightly is not easy. The price of virtue is constant alertness. The path of rectitude is neither palmy nor balmy.

The downward pull draws on us sometimes in the form of pleasure, sometimes in the form of pain. Neither the wealthy nor the poor are free from it. It comes to those who are making money and to those who are losing money, to those who have gained position and to those who have lost, to those who live in ease and to those whose living is a ceaseless burden. It makes its approach intermittently through the lure of life, the call of temptation, the desire for amusement, the gratification of appetite, the lust of leisure and the indulgence of passion. Neither the old nor the young are free from its persistent drawings. It attacks and stifles

and paralyzes the soul in its upward yearnings. It tends to materialize and brutalize and deaden the spirit. It clams and clogs and cloys the affections. Like the force of gravitation it acts on all. Can it be resisted? Can it be overcome? The gospel of grace is the answer to these questions.

From the deck of a swiftly moving ocean steamer I have watched the magnificent sea-gulls sailing majestically and calmly parallel to the movement of the ship without apparent effort or even motion of wing. Pulling at them all the time was the great and mighty force of gravitation, which, if they had yielded to it, must have drawn their bodies immediately deep down into the sea. The wonderful thing about it was that this constant downward force was counteracted by other forces which their tense wings drew from invisible sources, so that the great birds, instead of falling downward, moved forward. Instead of being hurled into the depths, by the power of resistance they flew triumphantly onward. Their sensitive wings gathered from the impalpable atmosphere the power which enabled them to overcome the downward pull. With tense wing they breasted the imperceptible forces and brought them into operation, thus transmuting into progress what otherwise would be the forces of destruction.

Around us, and within the reach of all, there is the divine invisible energy which will bear us up if we will but lay hold on it by faith. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." "Fear thou not; for

I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." In my childhood I read a charming story of the Great Hands. It told of a little boy who had to make his way through the world alone. If he suffered hunger, the great hands fed him; if he fell, the great hands lifted him up; if he had to cross a stream, the great hands bore him along; through the night the great hands were folded about him; in the beating storm the great hands sheltered him. I remember now the strange interesting pictures of those two mighty hands taking care of this little boy. Another thing I remember from the story is that the little boy had to call on the great hands whenever he was in need, and as soon as he called, the hands were there to take care of him. The story is only a myth in the material world, but it is altogether true in the world of the spirit. "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands." "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up." "My grace is sufficient for thee." How may we lay hold upon this promised power and so overcome the forces that are hindering us? Under what motives shall we spread and hold tense faith's wings, keeping the soul breasted against the upward-bosoming forces of God, so that we may resist the netherward pull of earth?

ADVERSITIES

Adversity is a challenge to the soul to spread its pinions and avail itself of the sustaining forces of grace. The Bible is largely a record of the triumphs achieved by those who were hard pressed by trial and affliction. Jacob said, "All these things are against me," but viewing the same incident from a point more brightly illumined by the divine purpose Joseph said, "God did send me before you to preserve life." Speaking of tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, Paul said, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." This he said in conscious reliance upon the divine strength. Let all who feel themselves defeated and beaten down by adversity take heart for the conflict and they may yet win through the power of the unseen and eternal world.

UNREALIZED IDEALS AND ASPIRATIONS

When we compare ourselves as we are with what we thought at one time we were going to be we are often filled with remorse and chagrin. Who of us have measured up to the standards which in babyhood our mothers set for us? Who of you have risen to the heights of character, usefulness and achievement which greeted your youthful eyes? Vast multitudes have found themselves baffled and broken. The downward pull has brought them not only to the sea-level of life, but

deep beneath the billows. They are like the man in Ethelwyn Wetherald's poem —

“I talked with you to-day, all three—
Two of you lurked unseen—
Yourself, the boy you used to be
And the man you might have been.

“You never knew that silently
They smiled at you unseen,—
The ardent boy you used to be
And the man you might have been.”

The thought of these things ought to make the soul bear down with its wings upon the uplifting forces. “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” But we do this in the strength of the Gospel that offers broken men and women another chance. To the condemned woman, trembling at His feet, Jesus offered another chance, saying, “Go and sin no more.” To the man who denied Him Christ gave another chance as He talked to him in the morning light, on the shore of Galilee. Begin just where you are. God begins there. It is the only place to begin.

THE GOOD THAT YOU CAN DO

Yielding to the downward pull, like water poured out on the ground, you may have sought and found the common level. You move with the crowd.

You think with the crowd. You are restless with the restlessness of the crowd, or you settle down with the sodden ease and supineness of the crowd. It were good to detach yourself for a season and take your measure as one commissioned to meet the crowd's emergency. The disciples in the desert were themselves hungry, but they were startled into forgetfulness of their own need when the Master, compassionating the famished multitude, said, "Give ye them to eat." Their objective at once became changed from satisfying their own hunger to relieving the hunger of others. If you are on the point of surrender, if you feel yourself within the swirl of the vortex and about to be submerged, wake up quickly to the perils of others, and set yourself to the tasks of a deliverer.

A root-fact in human life is that each man must bear his own burden and render individual account to God; but this fact has its important collateral extensions. As advocates of the doctrine that every man must bear his own burden, the brewers and barmen stand forth as valiant champions declaiming on the freedom of the individual with equal loudness and volubility, crudely unmindful of the fact that a part of the individual's burden is his responsibility for the welfare of others. Our responsibilities are so interwoven that we cannot isolate ourselves and claim the exemptions which might rightly have belonged to Alexander Selkirk on his solitary island. Travellers in eastern deserts sometimes see a single palm-tree, whose axial root

goes down deep into the sand in search of moisture, but has no lateral roots ramifying right and left. It has no branches thrusting out from the stem, but at the top bursts into a single tuft of fronds. It is a perfect symbol of isolation. In other regions are seen the banyan-trees shooting out adventitious roots from the branches to propagate new stems till at last the interlacing extensions form a confederate colony of growths covering an area vast enough to shelter thousands of men. Is the root of human responsibility axial like the palm which is set upon living its own life apart from its neighbors, or is it radial like the banyan interweaving the fibers of its life into adjacent lives? If, as social beings, we are living under a federation of influence, how much more closely together should we be jointly bound within the bonds of religious influence. The root of responsibility strikes deep into the gospel soil thence to send out its lateral branches of helpfulness in every direction of need; and the need is everywhere and it is always urgent. The wild, mad life of our poor world needs clear thinking, ardent sympathy, unstinted love. The vast dim multitudes, the dissatisfied, the miserable, the self-destroyed, the tear-stained faces, the outcast lives, challenge us to a holy warfare. For the sad world's sake, let us not be pulled downward, but let us lay hold on the strength that will make us strong.

“ Only like souls I see the folk thereunder
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should
be kings,—

Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things ;—
Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout all like a trumpet-call,—
Oh ! to save these ! to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all.”

REGARD FOR LOVE'S INNER CIRCLE

Tender care must be had for those whose lives are most intimately affected by our own lives. Many fathers and mothers, yielding to the influences that disintegrate and annul spirituality, pull their children down with them. Lot's tragic career in Sodom is a red-light warning to all men not to become too deeply absorbed in business to safeguard the higher interests of their families. Careful of the physical wants of those dependent on them, they too often neglect the deeper needs of the soul. A touching story is told of a mother who was a professing Christian. One night she had dressed herself for a ball. When she was ready to go out her little boy came down to see her, and to say his prayers. She said, “No, mother cannot hear your prayers to-night. Run away, run away !” He turned sorrowfully, looking at her, and said, “Mother, where are you going ?” “Oh,” she said, “that does not matter. I am going out.” And the boy, with a look of horror on his little face, turned to her, and said, “Mother, are you going out when you are not dressed ?” She was fully dressed, so people would say ; but in

the eye of her child she was not dressed, and hardly in God's sight. She went to the ball, and she danced her last dance that night. She came back to her home, took off her ball-dress, and laying it upon the bed, said, "I will never wear that again; for if what I am doing soils the pure mind of my little boy, then it must not be right in the eyes of God's angels and His Son." She knelt down and yielded her womanhood to Christ. Calling together her worldly friends, she told them of her decision, and they were amazed when she said what she intended to do. They thought that she had become crazy, but she pursued her wonderful career and has been like a ministering angel to lead many others back into the ways of life. In His great high-priestly prayer our Lord said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." The same prayer ought to be on the lips of His disciples.

THE SANCTITY OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The fact of membership in the Church of Christ ought to be a mighty deterrent from sin as well as a powerful stimulus to righteousness. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Both the ordinances of the Church are used as a powerful plea against sin. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or, are ye ignorant that all who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?" It is as though a grave were dug beneath the cross. Becoming a Christian the old man is crucified with

Christ on the cross, and the burial in baptism is as a burial with Christ under the cross and advertises our death to sin. We come out on the other side of the cross from the grave to live a new life in Him. When we turn back to sin it is as if a dead body were rising up out of its grave to frequent its old haunts. The Lord's Supper is also used in a similar plea for Christians. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. Ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of demons." The allusion is to the feasts in the temples of the idols, but the application may be made in a general way. How can one align oneself with the evil forces of the world who has partaken of the cup at the table of the Lord? Remembering the ordinances and observing them we should be stimulated to resist all tendencies to turn away from the truth.

FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS

The supreme challenge comes to us from Jesus Christ. The things of the world tend to draw us downward, but Christ says, "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me." If Christ is lifted up in the life, in the heart, in the thinking, this uplifted Christ will lift us up. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Let every one who feels the alluring power of the world clutching upon his soul put Christ to the proof. He offers conflict as a privilege. He offers difficulty as a blessing. He offers

certain triumph as the reward. He does not ask us to walk alone. He does not invite us to spread our wings in vain. He will be with us to bless and to deliver. Are you willing to go over the bleak, bare mountainside with Him? He loves you. Do you love Him? If you do love Him, with a finer passion still, do you not feel what the Scotch maiden felt about her lover?

“The Cairnie mount is bleak and bare
And cauld is Clocknaben
But I’d rather be wi’ Donald there
Than be fair Scotland’s queen.”

OUR INHERITANCE AND DESTINY

A story is told of a noble young Roman, a son of a Senator of high standing, who, in the early days, was captured and carried away to the wild region in the north of Britain where he was held in slavery for many years. There he was forced to labor at the meanest occupations, poorly clad and filthily housed. He was treated with shame and cruelty. He might have been spared some of this had he been willing to join in with his captors, adapt himself to their repulsive ways, and identify himself as a member of their barbaric tribe. But this he would not and could not do because within him there lingered dim, sweet memories of a nobler life than these crude people had ever known. He refused to conform his ideals to those of the base savages who held him in bondage. Every day as he toiled on

he dreamed of handsome buildings, beautiful homes of refinement and men and women who were beyond comparison with those whom he saw about him. He felt within himself the movement of capacities which could never be filled with the squalor and baseness of his wild environment. Through the years he lived in conscious fellowship with another world. He walked under the charm of loftier ideals. His limbs, indeed, were manacled, but his mind he would keep unshackled and his heart he would guard in chastity for the sake of those whom he remembered. In his soul he kept the camp-fires burning for the breaking of a day which he hoped would come. And when the day came, as come it did, when the conquering tide of Roman invasion swept over the territory where he had been held so long; when the day came, as come it did, when he was set free he found that his higher instincts had not deceived him. His memory had not proved him false. His hopes had not lied to him. Yes, all the time there had been a world altogether different from the baseness in which he moved. Indeed he was a citizen of a proud city, the stock of an imperial race. The world for which he had kept himself true had been there all the time. His faith in it, and hope for it, had not wavered and had kept him from sinking down into brutishness despite the hardness of his lot. Let the children of God remember that their citizenship is in heaven, that here they have no continuing city, but are here to harbinger the com-

ing of the day of victory, and though held down temporarily, though here as sojourners, we will in hope and love maintain unbroken tryst with the imperial day of our destiny when we shall be like Him and see Him as He is in our Father's house. In the strength of this hope the disintegrating influences of the world may be resisted and overcome. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Our dignity, which consists in being the children of God, and our destiny, which comprises our likeness to Him and vision of Him, should determine our duty of purifying ourselves even as He is pure; and this must mean constant striving against, and ultimate victory over, the forces that war against the soul.

XIII

FINDING AND FOLLOWING THE STAR

"And they, having heard the king, went their way; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."—MATTHEW 2:9-11.

NOT for the purpose of telling the sweet romantic story of these wise men from the East has this text been chosen, but to call attention to their fine idealism which impelled them to follow, rediscover, and follow again the guiding star, until their quest was achieved. It is fitting that they have been called magi, or magic men, for they are indeed the true men of magic who can free a spiritual ideal from materialism and selfishness and pursue it until it becomes a reality. The world's pioneers of progress have always been the seekers. The dauntless explorers who have struck out across the unbeaten areas have opened new avenues of conquest and blessing to those who followed. On the other hand many have been lured onward to defeat by false and unworthy pursuits. Pleasure, power, possession—these make the triple quest of the great majority of human beings.

Most men go out hunting for a kingdom of some kind or other, but these magic men sought not a kingdom, but a king. And after all that is what we most need—a king who can command, a king who can bring into obedience and reverence all that we are and all that we hold. They sought the newborn King in order that they might worship Him.

And who is this King? Those of us, who with the wise men have found Him, know that He is worthy to be called by this name, and that He of all others can rightfully extend His dominion over all the faculties of our nature, since He and He alone can enter into the deep and mystic realm of the spirit and lay His hand upon the centers and sources of being, meeting, filling and satisfying the uttermost yearnings of the soul. This indeed is His realm, and here we must find Him, if we find Him at all.

Thomas Carlyle once said to Holman Hunt that he would give one-third of all he possessed for a true picture of Jesus. Of course he meant the picture of the physical face of Christ, but in this all artists have failed, and they have acknowledged their failure as do those who have seen their pictures. Such a picture would be the outward expression of perfect character,—a picture of the king of the souls of men. Leonardo Da Vinci, the universal genius, spent ten years on his great painting, "The Last Supper," on the walls of the chapel in Milan. With ease he finished the pictures of John, Peter and all the others, but the portrait of Jesus.

That he could not make to his satisfaction, and it is said that after the ten years of trial he gave up the attempt and a less conscientious hand painted it. We may not look upon the material picture of Christ ; but with chastened, clarified spiritual vision we may, by a study of the written word, look upon Him. In the " Idyls of the King," Tennyson makes the lifelong quest of the noble Arthur's knights to be the finding of the Holy Grail, but the true knighthood finds not its flower in seeking the Grail of the Lord, but in seeking and finding the Lord of the Grail. It is this above all things known in the universe which purifies, elevates, and virtuates.

LOSING SIGHT OF THE STAR

Most sciences have their origin in such wants of men as are bounded by this present life ; but in astronomy the first impulses came not from the craving of the intellect nor from the requirements of the body, but from the soul's conscious necessities. Astronomy is the science which began in man's need of religion. Indeed it was the religion of the world's youth. To these wise men it proved the very pathway to the Saviour. By the star they were led to Christ the King.

" They who have bowed untaught to Nature's sway,

And they who follow Truth along her star-paved way."

As they journeyed toward the land of the King's nativity the wise men seemed to lose sight of the

star. In the story of "Ben Hur" one of the washer-women at the pool of Siloam, speaking of these wise men who had been seen coming into the city, says: "Nobody knew them; they looked as if they had come from the ends of the world. Only one of them spoke, and of everybody on the road, even the women and children, he asked this question, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" No one gave them answer—no one understood what they meant, so they passed on, leaving behind them this saying, "For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." In their perplexity it seems that they turned for information and guidance to the Jerusalem authorities. Here is a suggestion which ought to touch deep into the lives of many who have lost sight of their early ideals. How many men and women among us there are who do not see the star any longer, and wander around without any heavenly guidance. One is sometimes forced to feel that we are in the presence of a society whose real gladness has well-nigh died out, and in which hope is almost extinct. Much of that which passes for pleasure is only a fruitless effort to quiet the wounded heart. It is true of throngs of people that the bright dreams of youth have vanished. The outpourings of the deepest passions of the soul recoil on us in mockery. We may attire ourselves in gorgeous apparel, fare sumptuously every day; lay tribute upon the resources of the land; make nature serve our pleasures; still there may be lacking vision.

There may be no sight of the star, and the world is surely learning that pampered luxury and gratified curiosity cannot heal wounded spirits. Men have learned many things, but they have not learned how to avoid sorrow, to escape disappointment, or to be jubilant when hope has fled. In the maze and mist of domestic and business cares, in the trial and turbulence of political, social and commercial life, such clouds of dust have been raised around us that the stars have been obscured. To the question, "Where is the king?" no one gives answer, and as the washer-women by the Siloam pool said of the wise men, no one understands what they mean, so they pass on, leaving behind them this saying as only a faint memory, "We have seen his star in the east."

THE APPEAL TO THE SCRIPTURES

But they would not be deterred in their pursuit. They entered the city—the sacred city of the King—and asked their question. And their question troubled Herod and troubled all Jerusalem. Their quest of the new-born King created a mighty stir. They must find Him. They have seen His star. They must see Him. They will not let go their ideal. They will not abandon their purpose. They must not fail. Their past experience, their very hearts, cry out for this King. They will, they must find Him. The scribes and priests and learned men are called together. The blessed word of prophecy is produced which verifies, justi-

fies and offers fulfillment to the longings of their souls. Yes, there is to be a governor, a prince, a king, and He is to be born in Bethlehem. Well, then, to Bethlehem they will go, and thus with their hopes aroused, they set out for the royal little village ; and lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them. Yes, they have found the star again ! And its gleams glint along their anxious way, and they rejoice with exceeding great joy. If you have lost your way, if you have lost sight of the star, if your faith is broken, if your hopes are fallen, if your ideals have gone down, be sure that you need not despair. Do like the wise men did who went to inquire of God's word. Come to the church. Come and hear the Gospel preached. Come to the open Bible. Many things that have been said against the churches are not true. The churches do stand for the restoration of ideals, for the renewal of faith, for the quickening of hope. Come to the sure Book of prophecy. Every worthy aspiration, every true ideal of life will find in the Bible its unvarying counterpart, its promise, its guarantee of fulfillment. Do the wise men from the east cherish the thought of a new-born King, and have they followed His star along the dreary way ? Then look into the Book of truth and find that God has promised that the King shall be born, and has pointed out the place of His birth. Come to the Book and find your heart longings verified. The God of the star is the God of the heart, and the God of the heart is the God of the Book. The

Book and the star together will lead the seeker to the feet of the King. Come with sincere purpose and you will find Him. The rich men sought Him that they might worship Him, and they found Him. Herod sought Him that he might kill Him but found Him not.

OPENED TREASURES

“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” They paid the homage that was due to the King in three acts: First, the worship of the body—“Falling down;” Second, the worship of the soul—“And worshipped him;” Third, the worship of their goods—“They presented unto him gifts.” With these three we are to pay proper reverence to the King—our bodies, our souls, our goods. Without them altogether worship is but a crippled, limping sacrifice, neither fit to be given by sincere men, nor received by Christ. They opened their treasures and presented unto Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. There is no better place to open our treasures than at the feet of the King. What did they give Him?

FIRST, GOLD

This is the first offering made to Christ. It was an offering of gold, costly and precious. There is no doubt but that the thing to be desired supremely

in the world is that the money power shall be consecrated to Christ, that the gold of the world shall be sanctified at His feet. When it shall be thus sanctified, oppression and poverty will cease, and men everywhere will love one another as brothers. The really wise men must desire and seek this thing. They must seek to make it a reality. All the truly wise will unite in the effort to bring the money power to the feet of Jesus. The golden age will come when the gold of the age is brought under the Saviour's sway.

SECOND, FRANKINCENSE

The second gift was frankincense. Frankincense was the resinous gum obtained by cutting a certain tree. It was valued for its sweet odor when burnt, and was generally used for incense in temple worship. May we not say then that the frankincense stands for all that pertains to our spiritual nature—our ideals, our loves, our aspirations? The constant devotion of an adoring heart. How much happier we would be could we open our treasures of love as Mary broke the alabaster box to pour its contents upon the feet of her Lord. If all desires and loves were thus purified in the presence of Christ the world would be filled with the sweet odor of the burning incense.

THIRD, MYRRH

And the last gift was myrrh. In this gift of myrrh from the wise men is there not a prophetic

hint of that other gift of myrrh which the rich men brought for His body when it was laid in the new-made tomb? Myrrh carried with it a suggestion of death. Not merely the death of the King Himself, but an earnest of the death of those who are willing to die with Him that they may also live with Him. Thus the final account of worship is the giving of self, which means the death of self. But those who thus die for Him shall also live with Him. Are we to-day willing to follow the star? Are we willing to pursue the high, unselfish ideal until our treasures shall be opened at the feet of Christ? Are we willing to make Him Lord of our lives, of our possessions, of our wills, for time and eternity? If so, then the true Christmas spirit will come into our hearts bringing that sweet peace of which the angels sang as they hovered over Bethlehem, that holy peace which the wise men received as they fell down before the Christmas King, offering Him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

XIV

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE HEAVENLY CITY

"The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst."—REV. 21:19, 20.

VERY early, and very naturally, the religious instinct of man led to the use of precious stones in connection with worship—the most valuable and elegant objects being chosen for sacred purposes such as offerings at the shrine of a divinity. The worshipper naturally thought that what was most valuable and beautiful in his eyes must also be very pleasing to the god he worshipped. Apart from being dedicated as gifts to deities, gems have been associated with all manner of religious fancies and superstitions, traces of which appear in the writings of many tribes.

The most striking scriptural instance of the use of precious stones for religious purposes is recorded in the book of Exodus regarding the breastplate of the high priest and the gems contributed to the tabernacle by the Israelites in the wilderness. A description of the stones in the breastplate is given

in Exodus 28:17-21: "And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, four rows of stones: a row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper, they shall be inclosed in gold in their settings. And the stones shall be according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names; like the engravings of a signet, every one according to his name, they shall be for the twelve tribes." Ancient Jewish writers give us many fanciful ideas of the character and value of these gems, but these wondrous tales are more curious than profitable, since we may be sure that no religious significance attaches to these stones other than that which appears on the surface.

The high priest's breastplate, as described in Hebrew tradition, was regarded by the Jews with peculiar reverence and the stones set in it were believed to be emblematic of many things. It is, therefore, quite natural that these stones were described in the book of Revelation as the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem. The names in some cases are not identical with those given in Exodus, but this may arise from various renderings of the Hebrew names in the Greek version. A further scriptural origin of the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem may be found in Isaiah 54:11, 12, where we read, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay

thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones."

Commentators both ancient and modern have given many explanations of the symbolic meaning of these precious stones. An interesting example of the attempts made in the middle ages to interpret the significance of the Apocalyptic gems is given in the following words: "In the jasper is figured the truth of faith; in the sapphire, the height of celestial hope; in the chalcedony, the flame of inner charity. In the emerald is expressed the strength of faith in adversity; in the sardonyx, the humility of the saints in spite of their virtues; in the sard, the venerable blood of the martyrs. In the chrysolite, indeed, is shown true spiritual preaching accompanied by miracles; in the beryl, the perfect operation of prophecy; in the topaz, the ardent contemplation of the prophecies. Lastly, in the chrysoprase is demonstrated the work of the blessed martyrs and their reward; in the hyacinth, the celestial rapture of the learned in their high thoughts and their humble descent to human things out of regard for the weak; in the amethyst, the constant thought of the heavenly kingdom in humble souls."

However fascinating these spiritualizing methods may have been at one time, it must be said that all such attempts to derive edification from the mystical meaning of these jewels must be governed by

the commonplace reflection that we cannot now identify them with any satisfactory degree of correctness. The best that can be said of such efforts is that they are pure conjecture.

This entire description of the New Jerusalem should not be regarded as literal. It is not a lesson in geography or architecture, but the picture of an ideal state of the redeemed, of the organized heavenly principles expressed in symbols. The figures do not mean dimensions; they mean ideas. The picture is a vision in which the ideal of the present is becoming the reality of the future.

The heavenly state will be the realization of our highest ideals. What legitimate deductions then may be made from this reference to precious stones as constituting the foundations of the heavenly city? What does this catalogue of gems suggest?

WEALTH

Here is the conception of untarnished enrichment, the fullness of wealth abounding but uncorrupting. For those who are hungry and poor and grieved and broken here is the city of light and joy. Its streets are of pure gold, its light is the divine glory, its gates are pearls, its foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones, its sustenance is found in the tree of life and in the river of life proceeding out of the throne of God. The promise is given "He that overcometh shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be my son." Lifted up into such a relationship and

such an environment the redeemed will find the limitations of the present life removed so that they will grow and expand and enjoy and serve and achieve, and there will be no impoverishment, no disappointment, no failure.

“ Go wing thy flight from star to star,
 From world to luminous world as far
 As the universe spreads its flaming wall ;
 Take all the pleasures of all the spheres
 And multiply each through countless years—
 One moment of heaven is worth them all.”

DURABILITY

And here is the ideal of durability. In our present state we are constantly grieved that the things which we prize and admire do not last. All around us there are change and decay.

“ There is no flock, however watched and tended,
 But one dead lamb is there !
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
 But has one vacant chair !

“ The air is full of farewells to the dying,
 And mournings for the dead ;
 The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
 Will not be comforted.”

Here we have a lesson in permanence, an apt illustration of lastingness. The love of precious stones is deeply implanted in the human heart and the cause of this must be sought not only in their

coloring and brilliancy but also in their lastingness and durability. All the fair colors of flowers and foliage, the charm and beauty of face and form and even the blue of the skies, the splendor of the rainbow and the glory of the sunset clouds last only for a short time. They are subject to continual change. But the sheen and coloration of precious stones are the same to-day as they were thousands of years ago and must be for thousands of years to come. In a world of change this permanence has a charm of its own that has always been appreciated. This durability of gems illustrates the permanence of the heavenly state. As gems retain their qualities, so heaven abides in its permanence. The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.

BEAUTY

And in this glorious chapter is offered the ideal of beauty. Whoever has looked upon a great exhibition of precious stones such as may be seen in the Morgan-Tiffany collection of gems or the collection of British crown-jewels in the London Tower, cannot but be impressed with the vast variety of beauty inherent in these rich and glorious jewels; but these are not to be compared with the beauties of heaven. Heaven is the realization of beauty. What conception even of heavenly beauty could be more exquisite than this blending of the verdant opalescence of jasper, the cerulean tints of sapphire, the varying splendors of chalcedony with the shimmer-

ing radiance of the emerald, the banded brilliance of the sardonyx and the flaming red of the sardius ; to further heighten the coloring there must be added the golden limpidity of the chrysolite, the faultless luster of the beryl and the crystalline perfection of the topaz with the golden fineness of the chrysoprase, while to complete this hallelujah chorus of colors requires the dazzling beauties of the jacinth mixed with the glories of the amethystine purple.

HARMONY

Heaven is harmonious. The blend will be unbroken. All discord will be hushed. Of the twelve stones in the high priest's breastplate it was said that they were so arranged as to produce the most harmonious effect in coloring and that such a splendor shone from them that all the people knew that God Himself was present to aid them. Of the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem it may be said truly that their arrangement is suggestive of the most perfect harmony. Orderliness prevails in heaven. "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." Out of the disharmonies of earth hope makes its appeal to the harmonies of heaven, nor does it meet disappointment.

"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of
good, shall exist ;
Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty,
nor good, nor power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives
for the melodist,

When eternity affirms the conception of an
hour."

The fleetingness and futility of all earth prizes find illustration in the contents of a sarcophagus taken from an ancient Egyptian burial ground, belonging to a period about fifteen hundred years before Christ. The mummy was that of a young woman. Not only was it evident from the rich ornaments adorning the body that she had been of noble birth, but it was also apparent that she must have been exceedingly beautiful in form and feature and that she must have died in the flower of her age. The hair was artistically decorated with exquisitely beautiful hairpins, about her neck was a necklace composed of four rows of beads with numerous pendants representing divinities and sacred symbols. The beads were of gold, ivory, carnelian, chrysoprase and other costly material. There were two smaller necklaces of wonderful beauty. Two large jewel earrings hung from her ears and on the index finger of her right hand was a ring set with a costly stone. A gold belt garnished with many precious stones was bound about her waist and a gold bracelet adorned with gems encircled her left wrist. In the sarcophagus was a beautiful mirror of gold and yellow bronze and three alabaster vases, one still containing some perfume. Beautiful and costly as were these jewelled ornaments, they failed to protect their

beautiful owner from an untimely end. The beautiful things of earth do not suffice us. The soul in its need cries out for heaven. Like Abraham, we look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. How poor indeed we are if we have no treasures laid up there ! The need of resting on the unchanging things of heaven and of having unquestioned citizenship in the New Jerusalem, receives powerful emphasis from a letter which recently came from the heart of suffering Europe, which contained this startling but heartening paragraph :

“ We here in this stricken, impoverished, devastated country have learned one thing, and that is, that there is no safety, no permanency, no refuge, no certain joy, no consolation except in religion. Those who have not Christ here are of all men most miserable, for the world has failed them. Everything human has failed—armies, treaties, diplomats, governments, Hague courts, money—everything has failed. There is no certainty anywhere. I have lost half of my family—all my neighbors have lost some one. We have all lost our homes, although perfectly innocent people, having nothing to do with the war. My salvation has been in Christ. I have ceased seeking security in this world. I have risen unto Him finding my refuge there above the inevitable vicissitudes of life. How rich one is who has Christ Jesus—how utterly helpless, poverty stricken those who have only the world.”

XV

CROWNING THE PILLARS WITH LILY-WORK

“And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.”—1 KINGS 7:22.

THE open porch at the entrance of the temple which King Solomon built was supported by two immense bronze pillars which were reckoned a marvel of workmanship—the product of the art and skill of Hiram, whom Solomon fetched out of Tyre. Each of these shafts was thirty-two feet high and six feet in diameter, bevelled into the shape of a lily-stalk broadening above into a capital of lily leaves round which hung wreaths of chain work resembling the branches of palm trees and pomegranates wound in festoons or garlands. The name of the right pillar was Jachin (strength); the pillar on the left was called Boaz (stability). The names were symbolical and indicated the strength and stability, not so much of the temple itself, as of the spiritual kingdom of God which was emblemized in the temple. These massive stately pillars were crowned with lily-work. “Upon the top of the pillars was lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.”

"Thus all below was strength and all above was grace."

The lilies crowned the pillars; the pillars supported the lilies. Thus does real beauty rest on strength, while strength upholds beauty. Abiding beauty must be based on strength; the glory of strength is beauty. Here is a parable which teaches some valuable lessons in life. The symmetry of the great bronze pillars was secured by the lily-work above. "So was the work of the pillars finished." The pillars were not finished until they received their lily crowns. Strength is not completed until it is transformed into beauty. Hiram could do the heavy work of casting the pillars. He also performed the delicate task of shaping the lilies and hanging the festoons of palms and pomegranates around the vast shafts.

Many workers to-day are so busy with the massive brass pillars that they have no time for the lily-work. So is the beauty left out of many lives. It cannot be said that one is cultured who has no taste for a poem, or a song, or a picture. In daily life courtesy, kindness, politeness and gentle thought for others, these form the lily-work diademing the brass castings of toil. Always the daily work should be crowned with worship—the lily-work above the pillars. The week of hardship and care is rough, unpolished and undecorated if it be not crowned with praise—hence the place of public worship in our lives.

Hardly would Hiram be remembered to-day for

his casting of the brass pillars. The lily-work which he placed on the pillars is the basis of his deathless fame. And here is a principle universal in its application. We are remembered not for the great things that we do, but for the loving and beautiful. Through the coming years President McKinley will be remembered for two things—his devotion to his invalid wife and his prayer for forgiveness for the man who murdered him. The hugeness and roughness of the pillars need the covering of the lily-work. Strength and stability count for much; they count for more when adorned with grace and beauty. Our Saviour taught us this in the gentle ministries of His life. He was patient. He was courteous. He had a thought for little children. He showed forbearance toward the wayward. He was ready to reinstate the fallen. He prayed for the soldiers who crucified Him. He died for those who sinned against Him. “Thy gentleness hath made me great.”

In Browning’s “The Boy and the Angel,” not even the archangel could take the boy’s place who, morning, evening, noon and night lifted up his heart and voice and sang, “Praise God!”

“His voice’s praise seemed weak : it dropped.
Creation’s chorus stopped.”

And God said, “I miss my little human praise.” Indeed the boy labored long and well the daily meal to earn. The archangel could perform that task, but he could not take the place of the boy

singing his praises to God. The boy crowned his daily toil with praise as the pillars of the temple were crowned with wonderful lily-work. And it was the praise which God missed when the boy's voice dropped.

Now think for a moment of the person of Christ, in whom are fulfilled the spiritual meanings of the temple. The ultimate values of life are found in personality, but these values are expressed only feebly and partially in the ordinary life of man. Indeed, no human being is ever a complete person. The career of the noblest man is a struggle toward the possession of that perfect personality of which he catches faint glimpses now and then in the course of his journeying. But there appeared One in whom these highest values were revealed in perfection. With Him there is no weary struggle toward an ideal; the ideal is itself completely manifested. The manifestation of this perfect personality was in His words and His works. He Himself is truth. His words and His works are the visible expression of Himself, like as the pillars stood in front of the temple.

And now comes the question, did Christ rise from the dead, or did death conquer Him? Did He pass through death to life, or does He still sleep beneath the Syrian stars? Was He but a human hero, or is He the only begotten Son of God? Was He delivered from the power of the grave that He might reveal to all men the sure promise of the risen life with Him, or did the tragedy of Calvary leave all the

glorious gospel of redemption incomplete ? Shall the Christian creed end with "crucified, dead and buried," or shall it march on to say, "the third day he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty "? Let the answer be : "But now is Christ risen from the dead ;" and for the underpinning of this answer, that it is Jesus whose resurrection we are considering. If it had been asserted by the witnesses that any other person had risen from the dead, the presumption would have been all against them. The moral incongruity would have discredited their testimony from the first. If we realize what "Jesus" means, and who He is, we will raise no doubt about His resurrection. His resurrection was that of one in whom His friends had recognized, while He lived, a power and a goodness infinitely beyond the common measure of humanity, and they were sensible, when it took place, that it was in keeping with all that they had known and hoped and believed of Him, so that they declared that God loosed the pangs of death because "it was not possible that He should be holden of it." Given the fact of the personality of Jesus, there can be left no room to doubt His resurrection. So are His words and His works, the expressions of His personality, sealed and crowned and glorified in His resurrection. His words and His works demanded that He rise from the dead ; His resurrection was the sequence and vindication of His words and His works. "And upon the top of the pillars was lily-

work: so was the work of the pillars finished." "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." Surely that man would be of all men most miserable who ran a race for a hope set before him, and found when he had reached the goal that he himself and the hope and all that had inspired him, crumbled into dust. But is not this largely true as it applies to all aspirations save those that are engendered by the fact of Christ who lived and died and rose again? He is our only hope, and in Him, and in Him alone, is found the one sure footing for the soul in its ultimate desires and necessities.

" Fear not I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, I will still give thee aid ;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee
to stand,
Upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand."

To press the case still further. The resurrection is more than a mere fact. There is such a thing as "the gospel of the resurrection," in which the fact is interpreted to the mind and heart and conscience of man in its divine significance. The resurrection is a message to be preached to sinful men for their salvation. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and Saviour

to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins." It is help and forgiveness and healing and life that we need. It is comfort that the sorrowing heart calls for. It is life whereof our nerves are scant. Here is the ground for hope, in the blessed and gladsome fact of the resurrection and enthronement of our Saviour, so that our poor human nature in its moral weakness may lay hold of the immortal love of God in Christ and through faith in Him triumph over the last enemy which is death. This is the good message which is freely and urgently offered to all who are tired and grieved and weak and sin-stricken. The great apostle had no abstract term like omnipotence, but when he wished to give a practical religious equivalent for it he pointed to the power which raised Christ from the grave and set Him on the throne with all things under His feet. This power which has done this is the greatest of which the apostle can conceive and he declares that this is the power which works in us and is great enough for every need of the soul.

" When darkness veils His lovely face
I rest on His unchanging grace ;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

" His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood ;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay."

Here then is the one foundation upon which to

erect the pillars of genuine character. Whoever would build broad and secure on "the roots of things," must see to it that he build where death cannot under-cut his soul's masonry. Build here your temple, rear here your character-pillars, and then crown them with the lily-work of the resurrection life—goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, courage and devotion. "And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished."

In that glorious vision of the final triumph of righteousness Christ says: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Revelation 3:12). Here is the goal of character, the soul's worthy destiny—to be made a pillar in the eternal temple of God; and here too is the soul's worthy adornment, the fadeless lily-work which is the handwriting of the Redeemer—"and I will write upon him my new name." So will the pillars be crowned with the lily-work by the hand of the divine Artificer.

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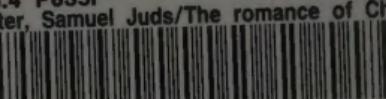
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